佐武と市捕物控 9

═紅葉狩═

石森章太郎

SHOGAKUKAN BUNKO

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■表題作他六編収録。

デザイン　上井ヒロテル
カバー装画　角田純男

佐武と市捕物控 9
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第２巻＝晩い夏＝　￥330
第３巻＝芒＝　￥330
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第８巻＝夏の詩＝　￥330
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「サイボーグ００９」
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第４巻＝￥330　第５巻＝￥330　第６巻＝￥330
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「馬がゆく！」
第１巻＝￥330　第２巻＝￥290　第３巻＝￥330
第４巻＝￥330　（全４巻・完結）

佐武と市捕物控 9

―紅葉狩―

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佐武と市捕物控 ⑨

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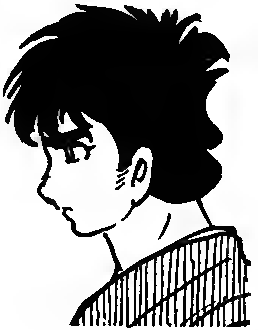
Shogakukan Bunkos
Sabu and Ichi's
Detective Stories
Volume 9
By Shotaro Ishinomori



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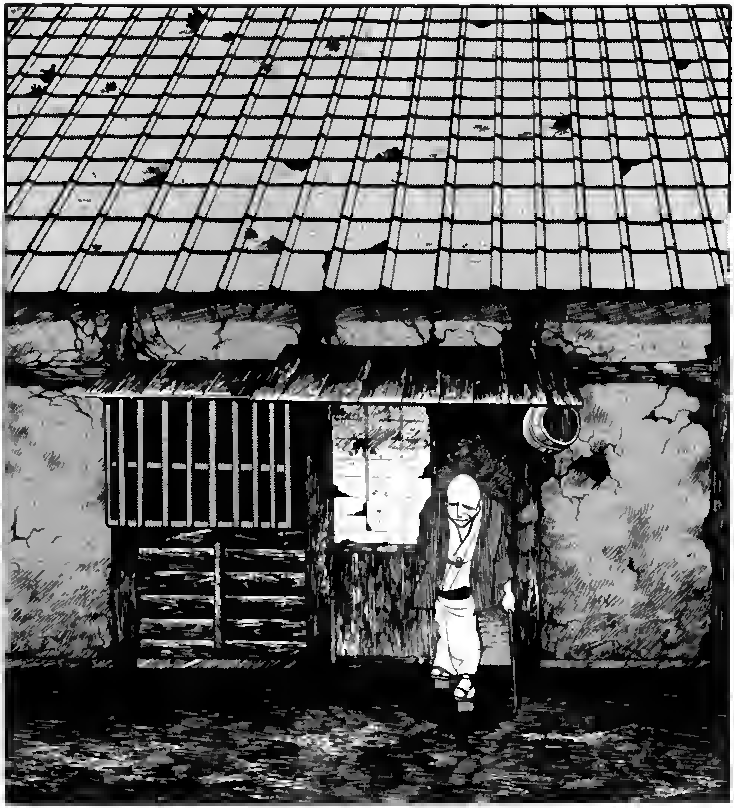
Sabu and Ichi's Detective Stories Volume 9 Contents

Chapter 50: The Autumn-Leaf Hunt
Chapter 51: Chrysanthemum Doll
Chapter 52: Dadabudabu
Chapter 53: End of the Year
Chapter 54: The Crimson Cord
Chapter 55: The Black Primrose
Chapter 56: Rain-Hole

Cover Illustration by Gen'ichi Takise

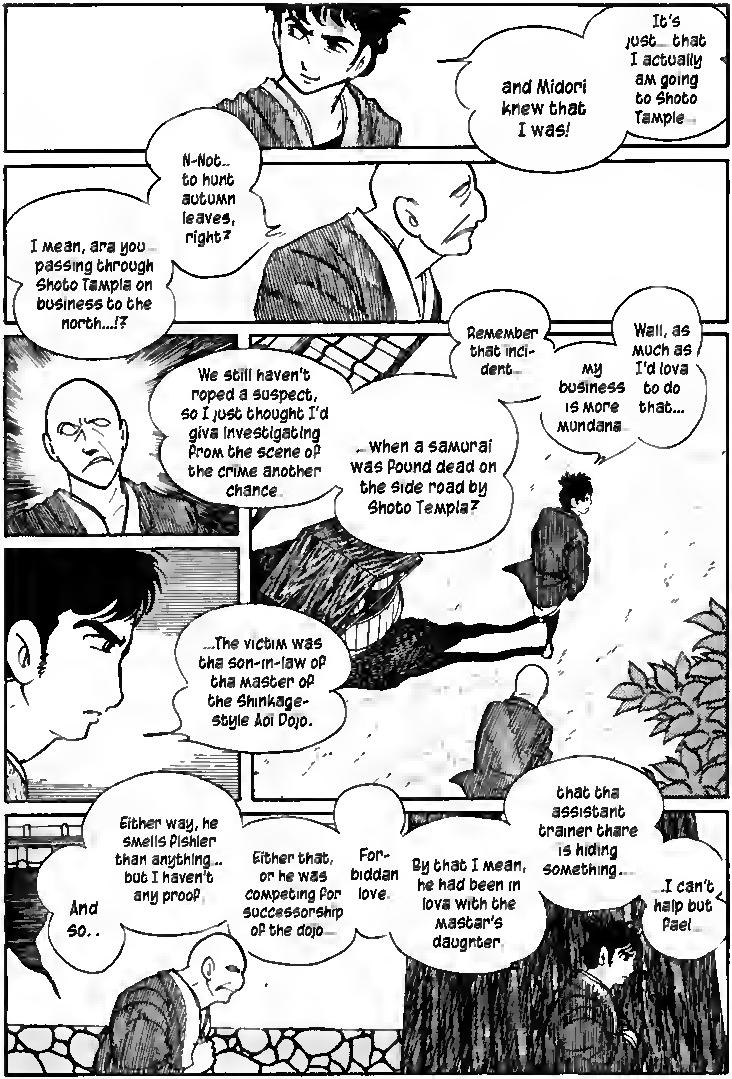
Chapter 50: The Autumn-Leaf Hunt

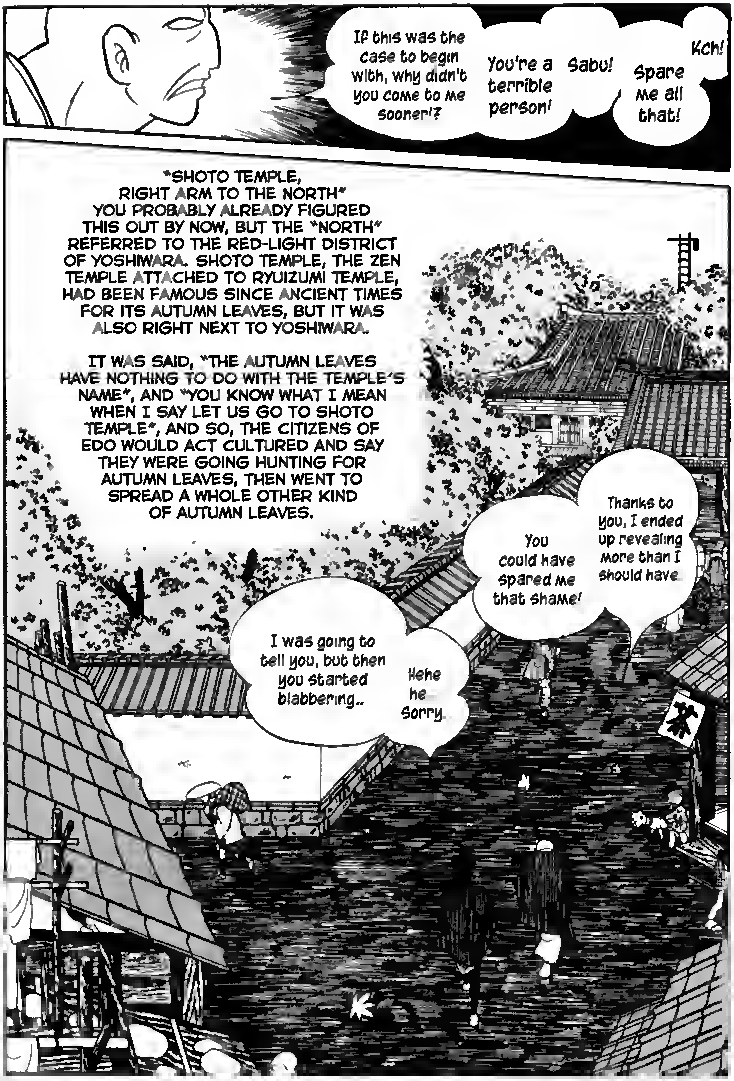


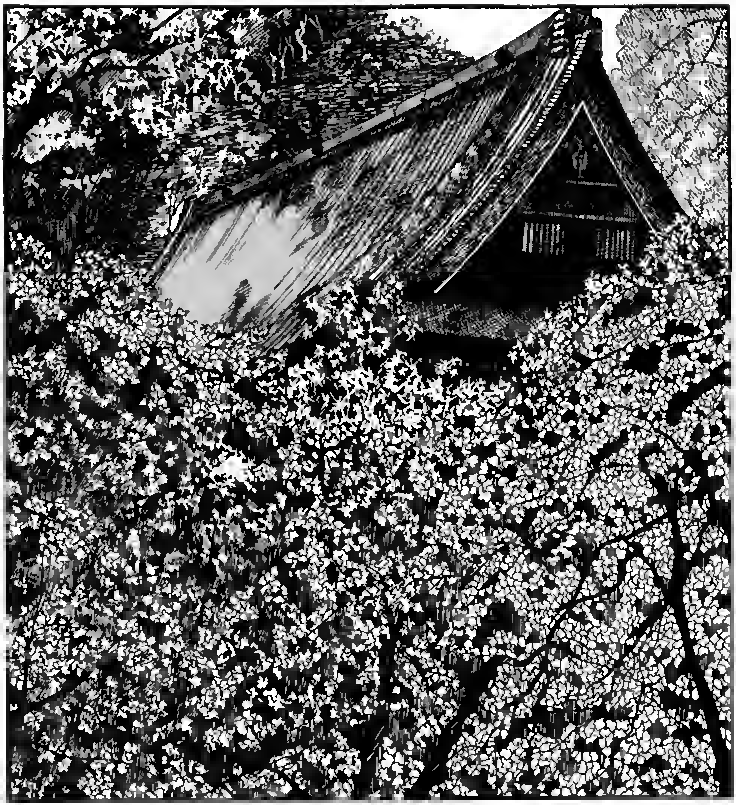
Perfect. That's exactly where I was headed, in fact.
Heh...
Hehe he
Just to Shoto Temple...
Yeah, Ichi.
Oh?
Heading out, Sabu?
Going autumn-leaf hunting...?
Hehe he...
Oh, you know it? You're just as cultured as I am, Sabu...
Oh really?
Don't your autumn leaves always smell like face powder, Ichi?
I'm a fifth-group Noh actor, you know.
...Of course not.
...Whoa!

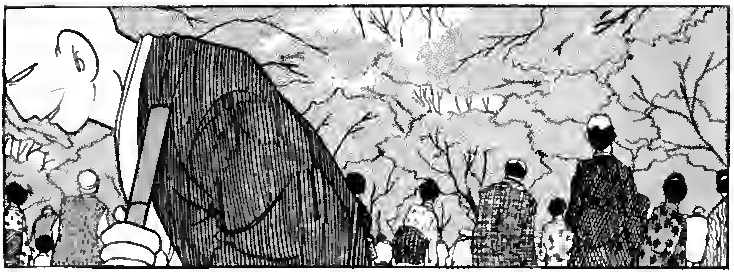
5 TL NOTE: IN NOH THEATER, A "FIFTH-GROUP PLAY" IS A PLAY THAT FEATURES THE PROTAGONIST IN THE ROLE OF A MONSTER, DEMON, OR GOBLIN

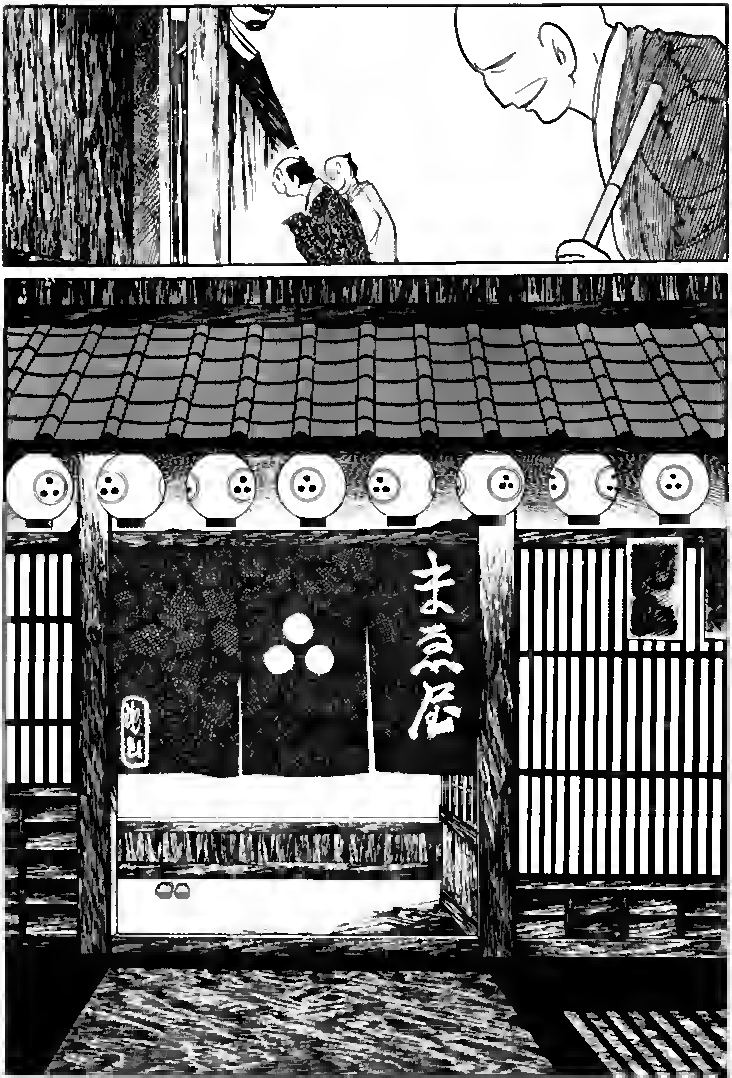
Tee hee!
I hope the demons are pretty!
Take care!
Come on then, Sir Taira-no-Koremochi... Let us to Mt. Togakushi of Shinano Province, to vanquish the demons.
Heh he...
Midori's really grown up, hasn't she ..?
Heh...
Well, I'll be...
Hehhe...
She's really grown up ..
to think she'd just let you go off..
But myself aside,
I'm a little bit irritated.. that she knew that much...
Well, I'll be damned.
What?
What is it?
W-
Aha hahaha haha .
Ha!


It's just... that I actually am going to Shoto Temple...
and Midori knew that I was!
N-Not... to hunt autumn leaves, right?
I mean, are you passing through Shoto Temple on business to the north...!?
Remember that incident...
Well, as much as I'd love to do that...
my business is more mundane...
We still haven't roped a suspect, so I just thought I'd give investigating from the scene of the crime another chance...
...When a samurai was found dead on the side road by Shoto Temple?
...The victim was the son-in-law of the master of the Shinkage-style Aoi Dojo.
Either way, he smells fishier than anything... but I haven't any proof.
And so..
Either that, or he was competing for successorship of the dojo...
For-bidden love.
By that I mean, he had been in love with the master's daughter.
that the assistant trainer there is hiding something...
...I can't help but feel...


If this was the case to begin with, why didn't you come to me sooner!?
You're a terrible person!
Sabu!
Kch! Spare me all that!
"SHOTO TEMPLE, RIGHT ARM TO THE NORTH" YOU PROBABLY ALREADY FIGURED THIS OUT BY NOW, BUT THE "NORTH" REFERRED TO THE RED-LIGHT DISTRICT OF YOSHIWARA. SHOTO TEMPLE, THE ZEN TEMPLE ATTACHED TO RYUIZUMI TEMPLE, HAD BEEN FAMOUS SINCE ANCIENT TIMES FOR ITS AUTUMN LEAVES, BUT IT WAS ALSO RIGHT NEXT TO YOSHIWARA.
IT WAS SAID, "THE AUTUMN LEAVES HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE TEMPLE'S NAME", AND "YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN WHEN I SAY LET US GO TO SHOTO TEMPLE", AND SO, THE CITIZENS OF EDO WOULD ACT CULTURED AND SAY THEY WERE GOING HUNTING FOR AUTUMN LEAVES, THEN WENT TO SPREAD A WHOLE OTHER KIND OF AUTUMN LEAVES.
Thanks to you, I ended up revealing more than I should have.
You could have spared me that shame!
I was going to tell you, but then you started blabbering..
Hehe he Sorry.





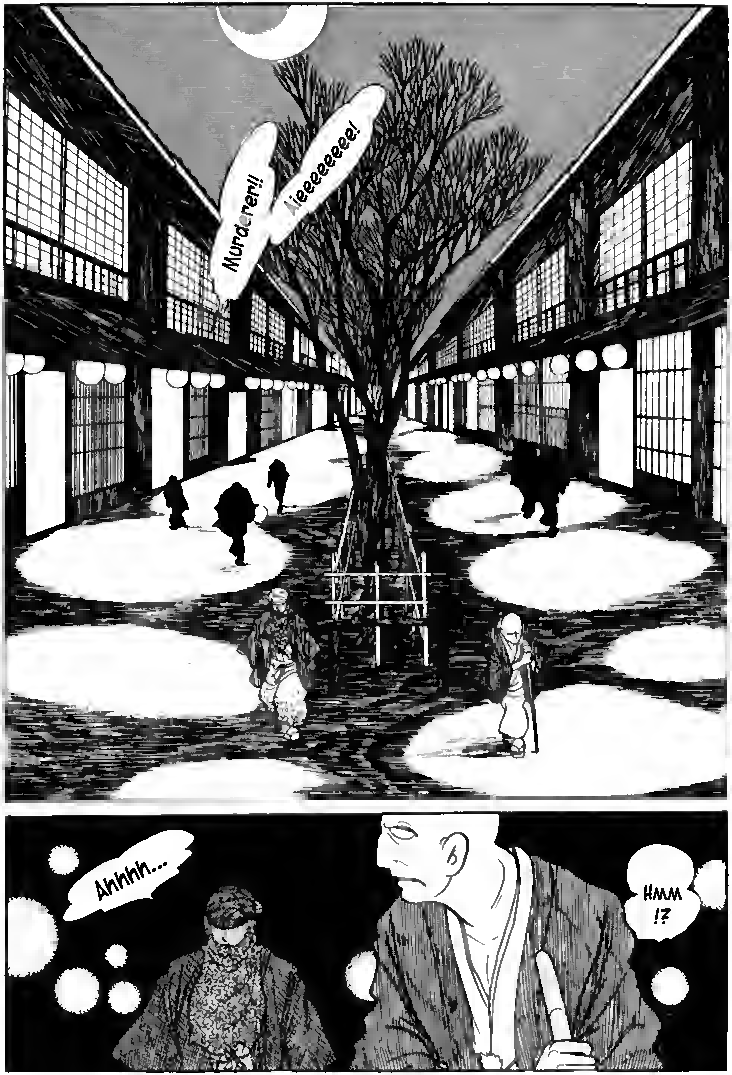


SIGN: MAYEYA

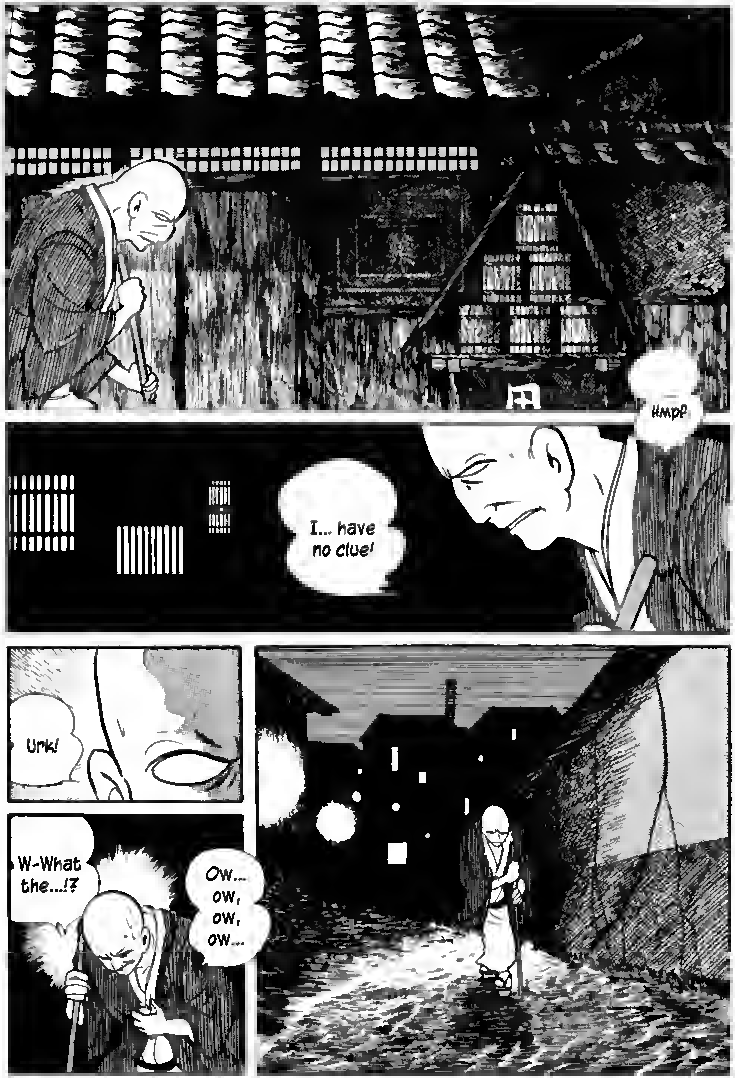
Every-where I go, they say they're packed!
I never expected... that there would be this many cultured people...
Man, oh, man...
And all the companions I had been looking for are booked till tomor-row...
A demon woman is one thing, but not even Sir Koremochi would vanquish a demon hag...!
It's a damn good thing I'm blind, but you can't trick my fingers and nose ..
the only woman that came here was a decrepit old woman!
On top of that, after keeping me waiting here for so long
Huh?
O-Oh .. Hehhe, it's nothing...
mumbling to yourself about?
...And what are you...

I just wanna drink tonight!
Now, don't be so stingy!
I told you, I don't need any
H-key, what's the matterz You brought me some morez
Kch!
How could you expect ma to stay sober herez
You may say that, but you keep downing it.
..
Hmpf.
I don't care if you want to drink or not, but I sure don't...
...That's sad to haar....
Tch!
Well, you're quite the sobbing drinker!
I'M leaving!
...You can't leave!
Please.
Don't go!

are you... Feeling alright?
Mas-seur,
.....
Huh ...?
Yeah... why?
Huh?
I... see...
WAAAAAH!
.. Give me a break..

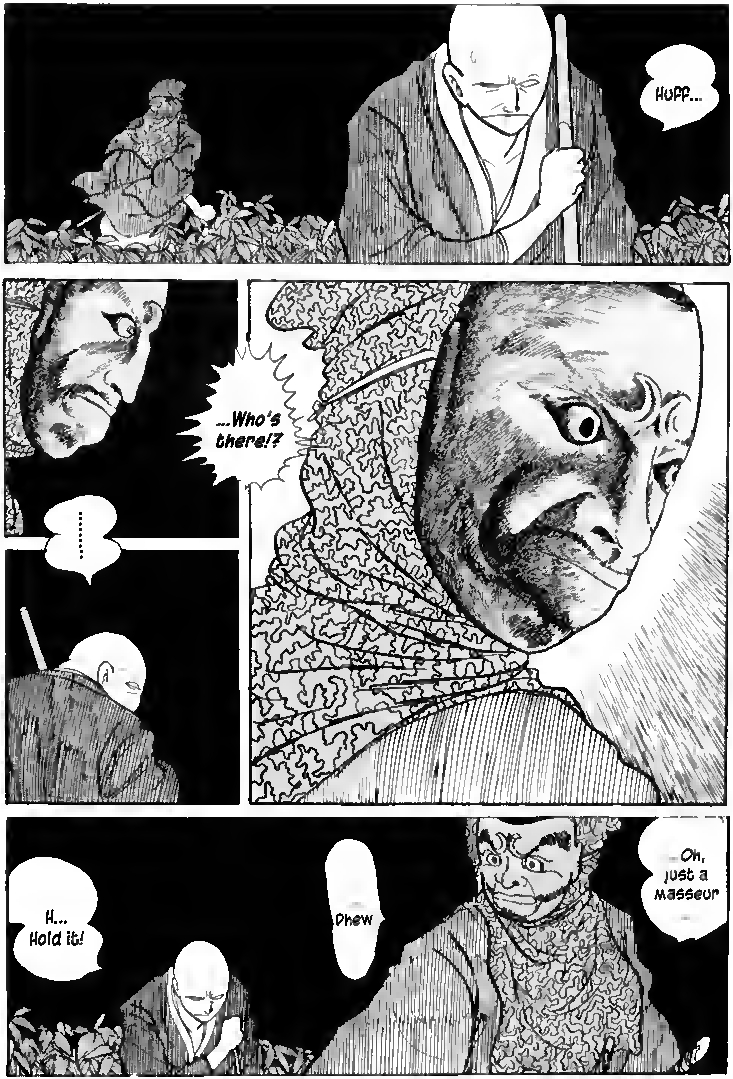

Murderer!!
Aieeeeeee!
Ahhhh...
Hmm
!?

Hic!
.....
Must've been one of her samurai patrons...
He's gone! He hid himself!
She's been cut in two, sliced like bamboo!
What is it?
What's all that racket about!?
I-It seems someone's been murdered!
..A woman named Ugo from Kaburaya!
but who was he...!?
...That man I passed did smell of blood...

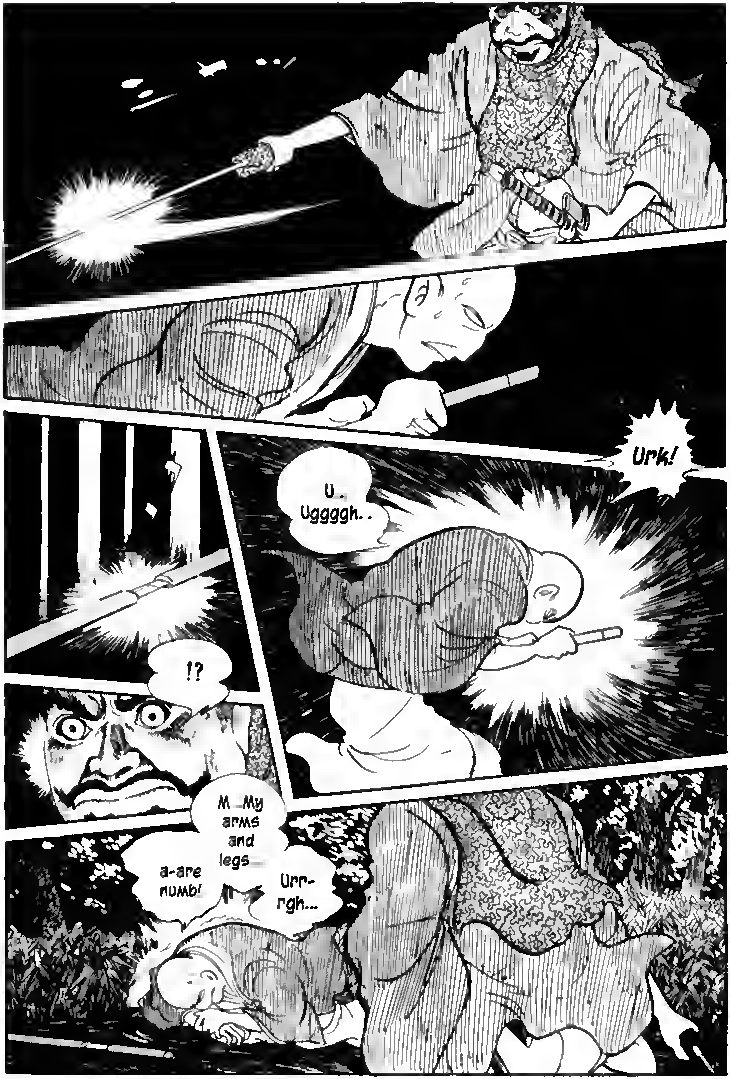

Hmp?
I... have no clue!
Urk!
W-What the...!?
Ow... ow, ow, ow...

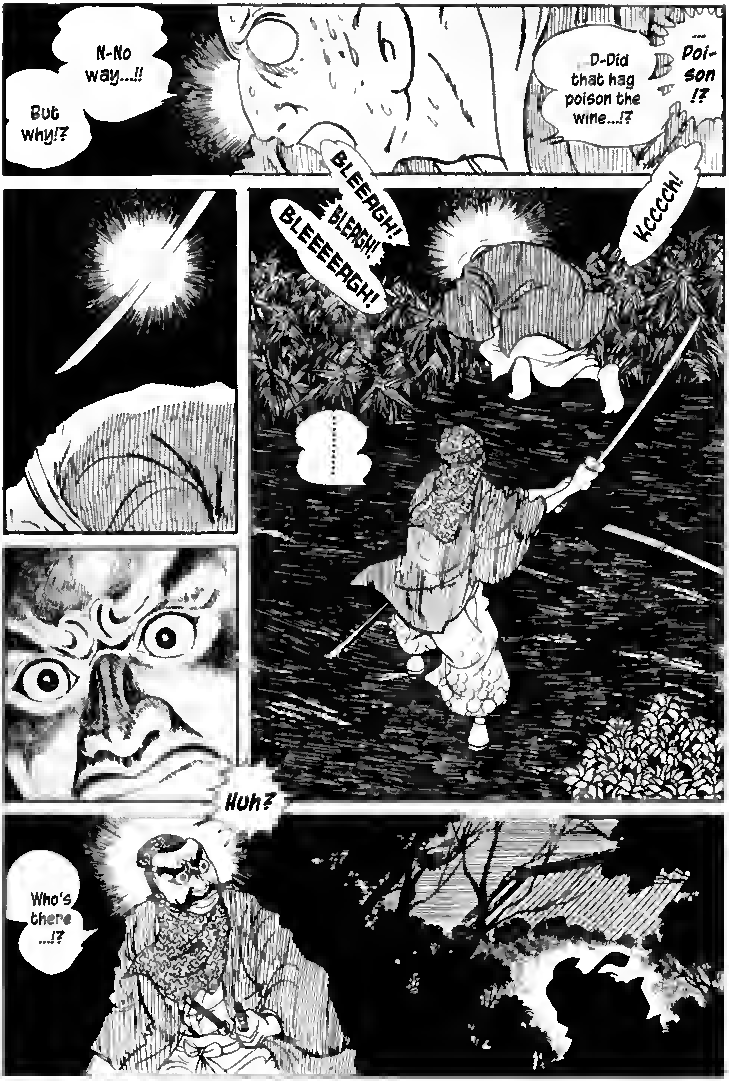
Urgh!
I...I just got a sudden jolt of pain in my stomach...!
T... This is bad...!
...Kch

HOPP
HOPP
HOPP


Hupp...
...Who's there!?
.....
H... Hold it!
Phew
Oh, just a masseur

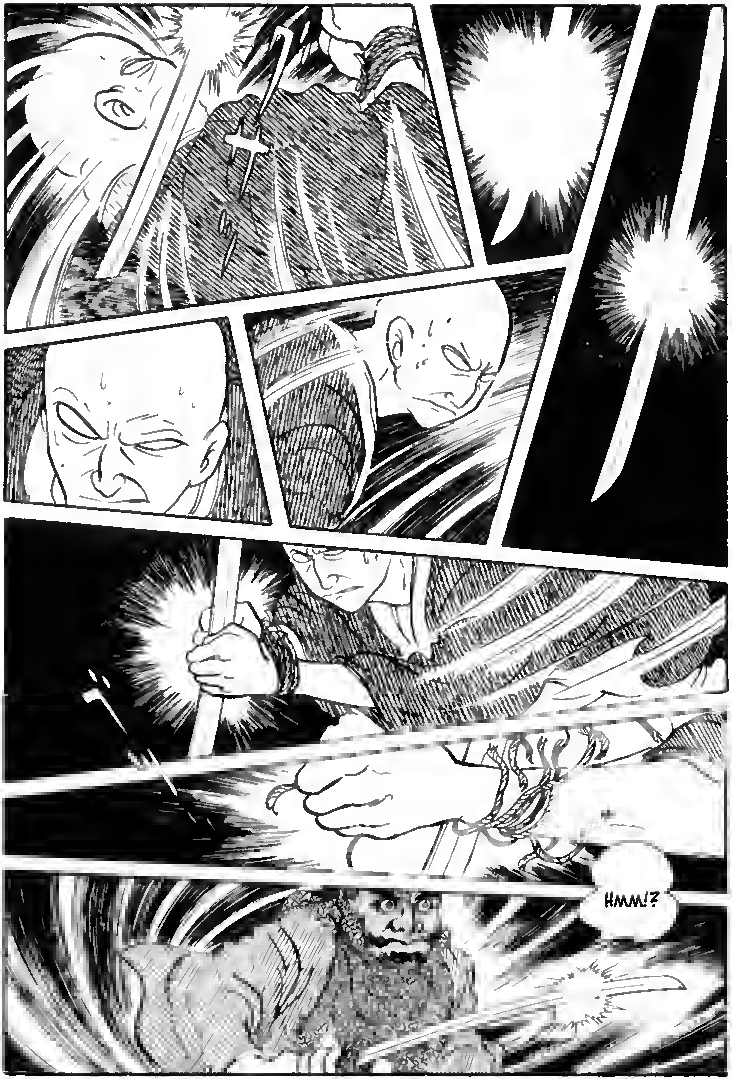
Hmm!?
...It was you, right?
You killed Kyo from Kaburaya, didn't you!?
Huh!?
R... Ridiculous...!!
...Don't try and play coy with me.
The blood on you wouldn't smell as much as it does if it wasn't fresh.
...But speaking of smelling...

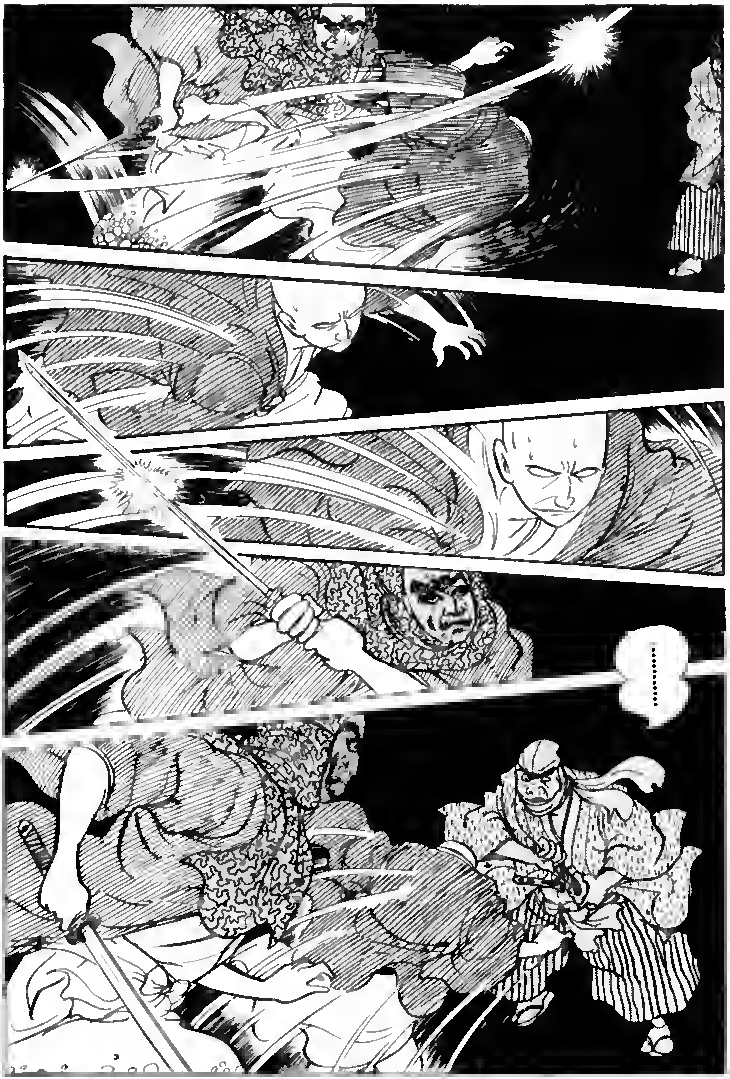

Urk!
U..
Uggggh..
!?
M..My arms and legs...
a-are numb!
Urr-rgh...


N-No way...!!
But why!?
D-Did that hag poison the wine...!?
...Poi-son!?
BLEERGH!
BLEGH!
BLEEEERGH!
Kcccch!
Huh?
Who's there ...!?

...It's me!
Tabara !?
But...
If the worst were to happen, I
...I...
...I
...I...
I...
Wow dare you meddle like that!!
...Based on your nature, I presumed you would be with a woman...
What are you doing here, !?
So I followed your trail.
.....
Hmpf
For the officials are still running around town.
...We should lie low here for a while...
...should...
...We should
...W
We...

...What's more important is, what should we do about this masseur?
I have a change of clothes hidden nearby
We just need to use those...
.....
...They say a pheasant will not be shot if it does not cry...


HMM!?

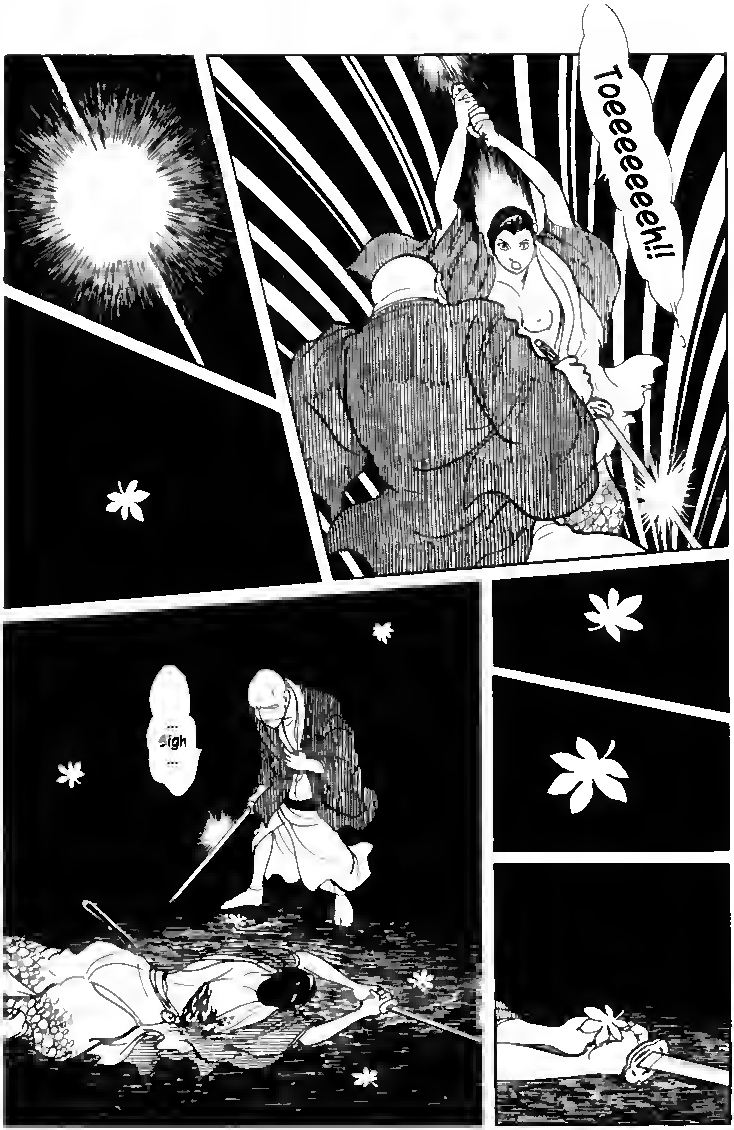


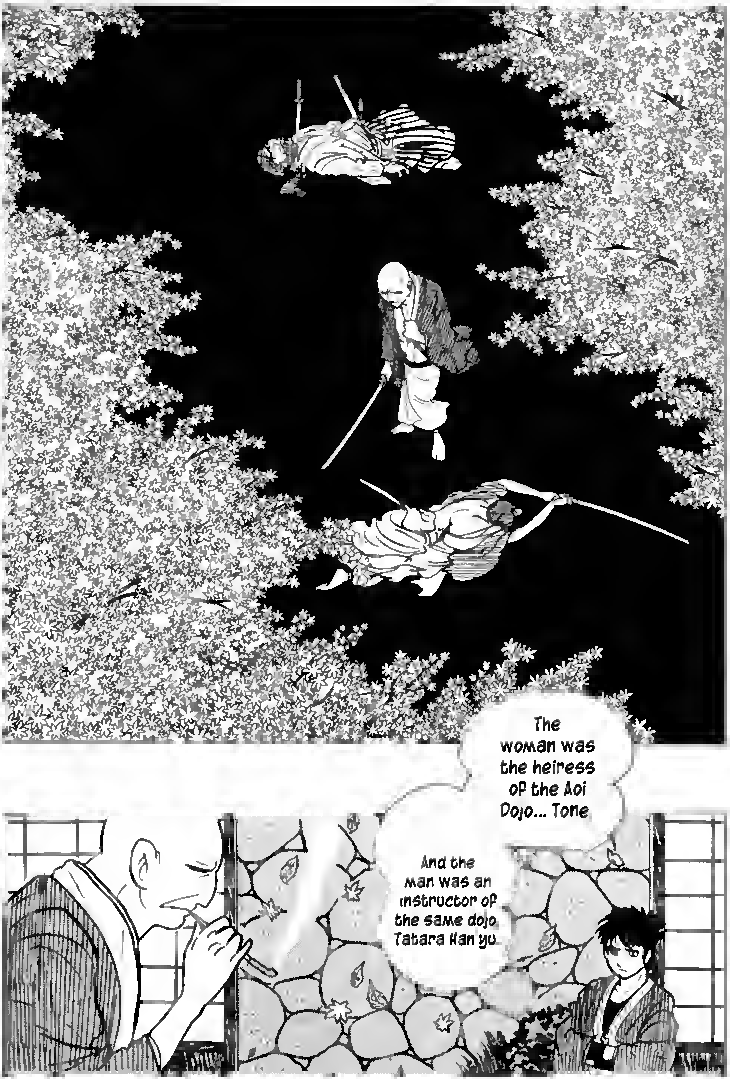
Unngh!!
Gah!

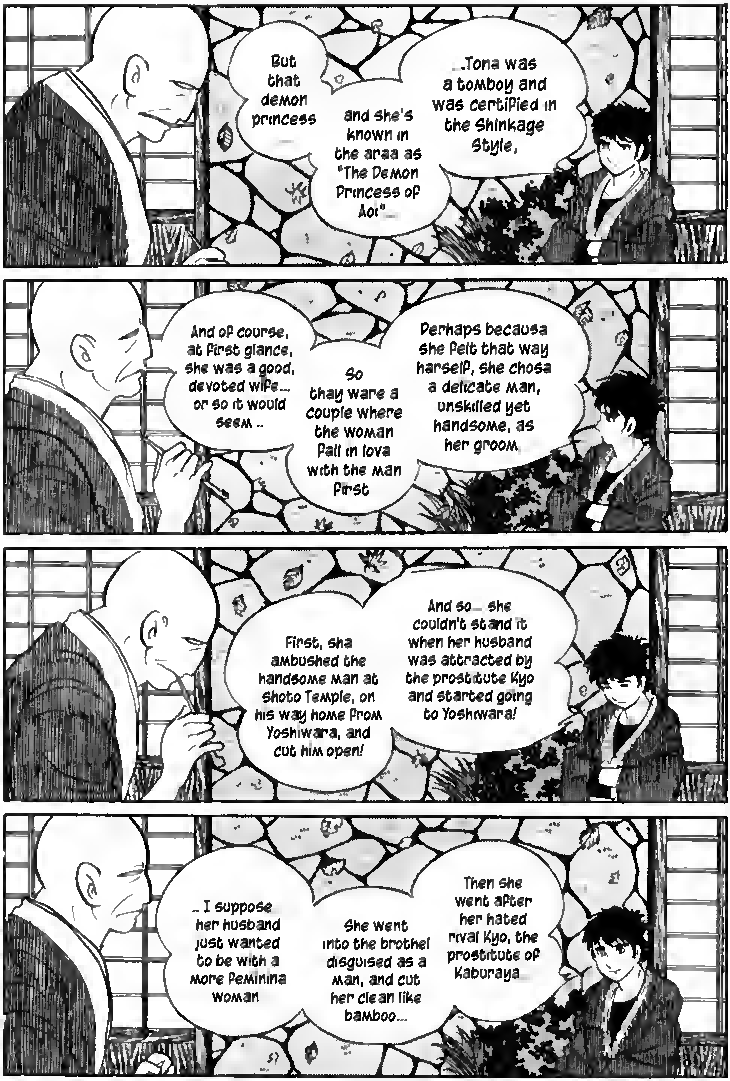
ヒュッ

Y...You are...

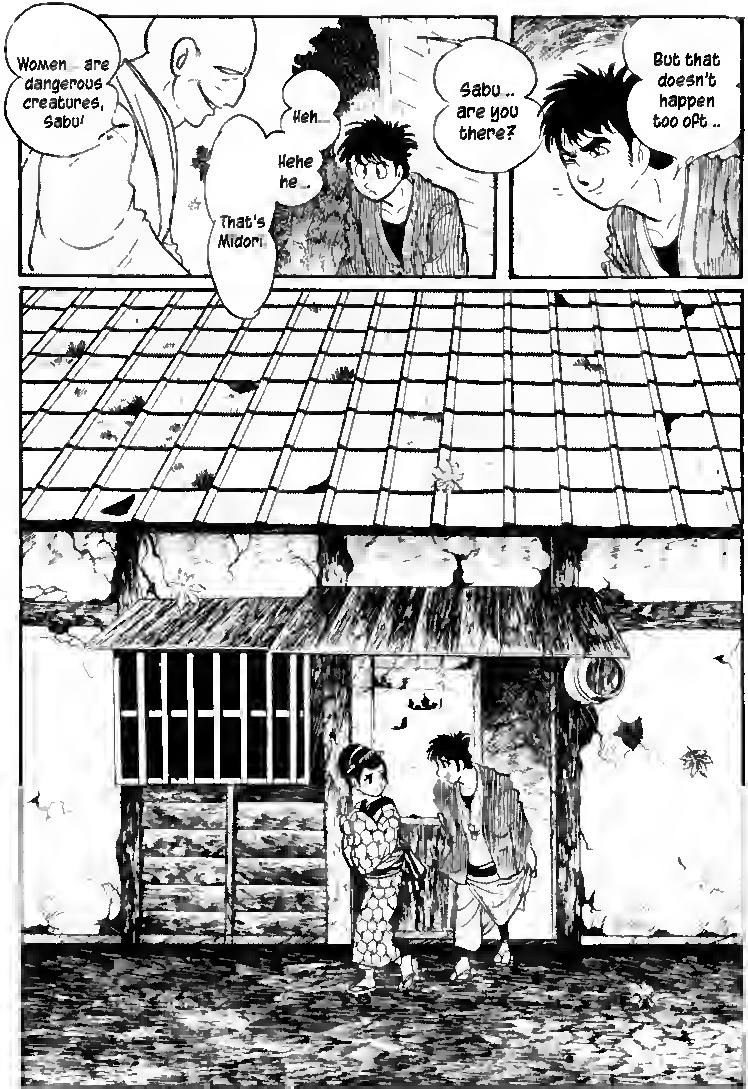
...a woman!!
Who are you ...!?
...But I don't understand.
Why did you pose as a man and enter a brothel..
and why did you kill that prostitute!?
.....


Toeeeeeeh!!
...Sigh...


The woman was the heiress of the Aoi Dojo... Tone
And the man was an instructor of the same dojo, Tahara Han yu.


But that demon princess
and she's known in the area as "The Demon Princess of Aoi"
...Iona was a tomboy and was certified in the Shinkage Style,
And of course, at first glance, she was a good, devoted wife... or so it would seem ..
So they were a couple where the woman fell in love with the man first
Perhaps because she felt that way herself, she chose a delicate man, unskilled yet handsome, as her groom
First, she ambushed the handsome man at Shoto Temple, on his way home from Yoshiwara, and cut him open!
And so... she couldn't stand it when her husband was attracted by the prostitute Kyo and started going to Yoshiwara!
...I suppose her husband just wanted to be with a more feminine woman
She went into the brothel disguised as a man, and cut her clean like bamboo...
Then she went after her hated rival Kyo, the prostitute of Kaburaya

But.. he had long since fallen in love with Tone..
had no direct involvement in the murders.
...The instructor I had been tailing...
So Ichi... wanna go to Shoto Temple?
And now my duty's done...
...So when he caught on... He loitered around out of concern for Tone's safety,
and that ended up with you cutting him clean in two...
Heh,
not for a while
...Luckily I'm safe because the poison wasn't too potent...
end wanting to hunt autumn leaves in the next life, poisoning me so she could take me with her!
...I couldn't stand another woman despairing the world,
Come to think of it, I heard that the old hag ended up with nothing more than a stomach-ache!
...You're right.
Hehe...

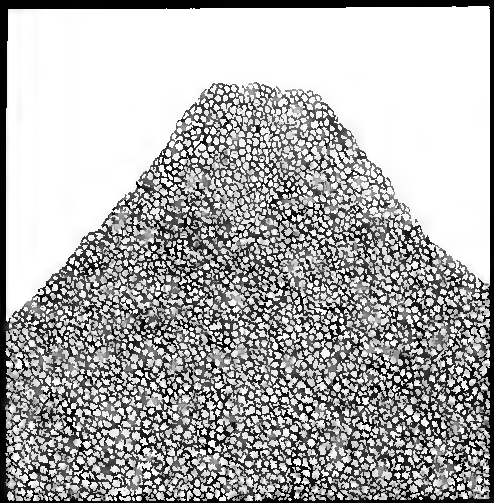


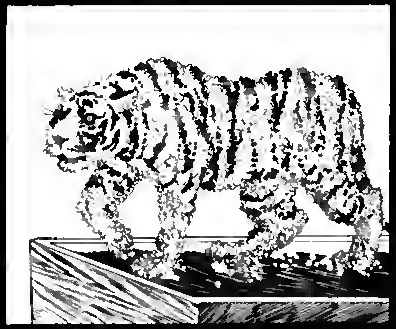
October 1970: "Autumn-Leaf Hunt" (FIN)

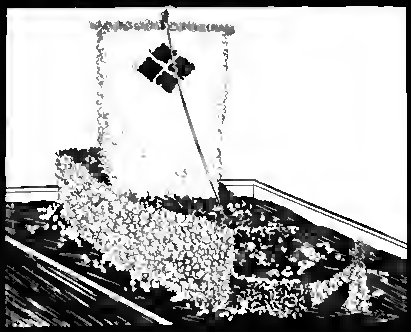
佐武と市捕物控
SABU & ICHI
CHAPTER 50
PRESENTED BY
HOKUTO NO GUN
AND
HAPPY SCANS
TRANSLATED BY
SYSTEMATICCHAOS
CLEANED BY
WRIGHT
TYPESETTING BY
KAZUHIKO
PROOFREADING BY
ANGELOFCHAOTIX
CREDITS PAGE
BY TROBMAN
WRITTEN BY
ISHINOMORI
SHŌTARŌ

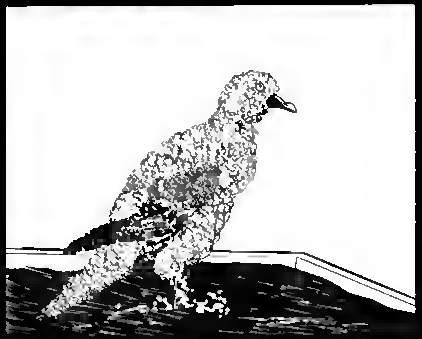
Chapter 51: Chrysanthemum Doll

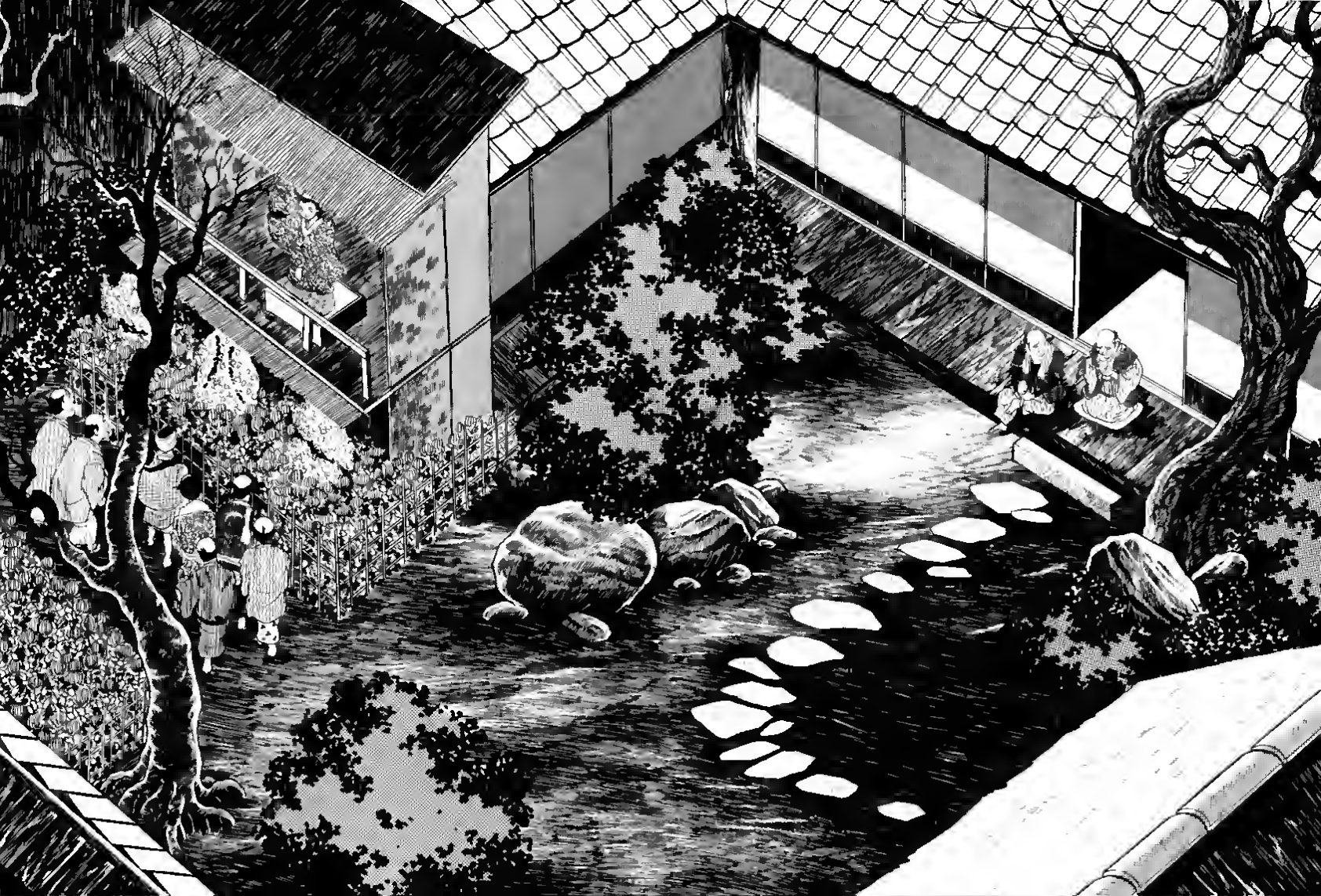
"SUGAMO STREET WAS CROWDED WITH PEOPLE, ALL PASSING BY FESTIVELY TRYING TO WATCH." (NOTES OF ERRANTRY) THE CHRYSANTHEMUMS OF SOMEI IN SUGAMO ALWAYS INVOKED SUCH EXPLOSIVE POPULARITY AMONG THE CITIZENS OF EDO BECAUSE IN THE BUNKA-BUNSEI PERIOD, EACH OF THE GARDENERS OF THIS NEIGHBORHOOD WOULD BEGIN TO CREATE CHRYSANTHEMUM DOLLS...

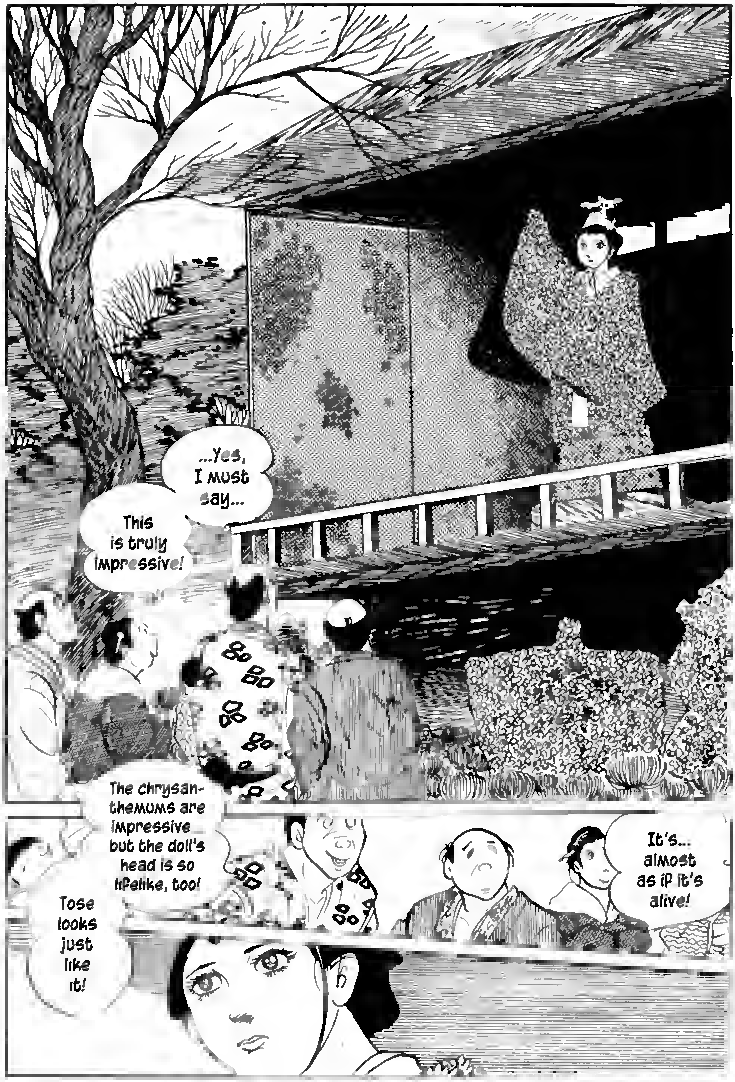






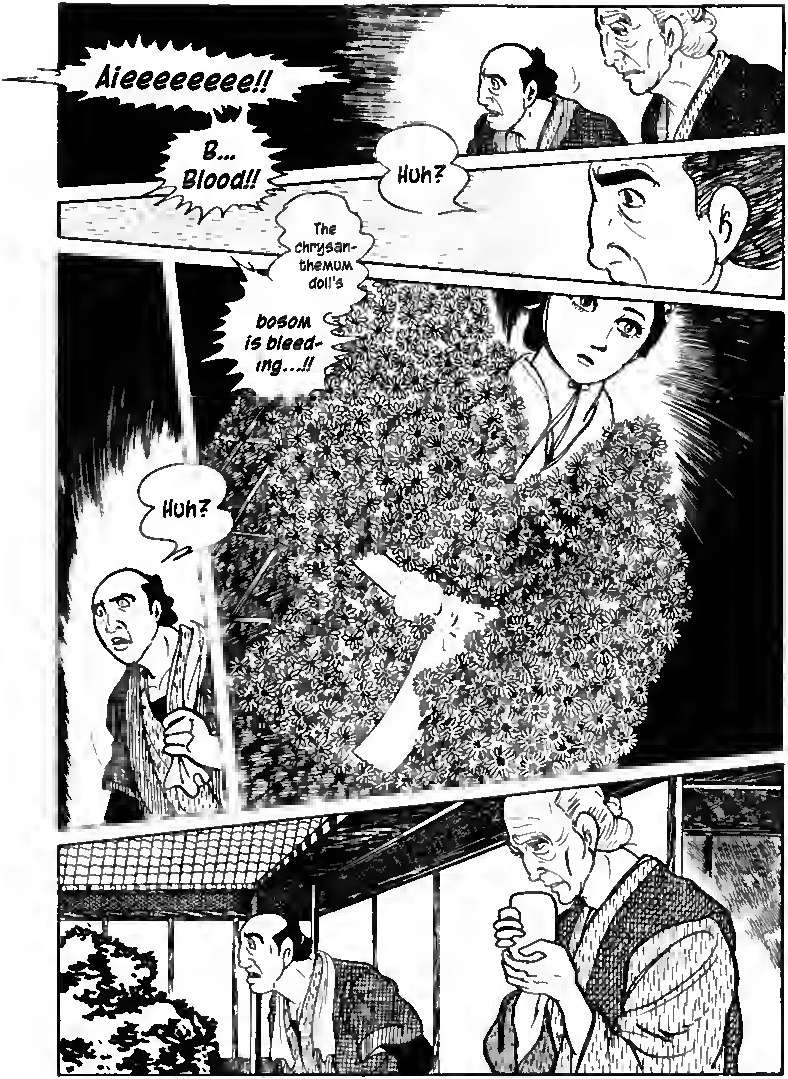





...Yes, I must say...
This is truly impressive!
Bo Bo Bo
The chrysanthemums are impressive but the doll's head is so lifelike, too!
Tose looks just like it!
It's... almost as if it's alive!

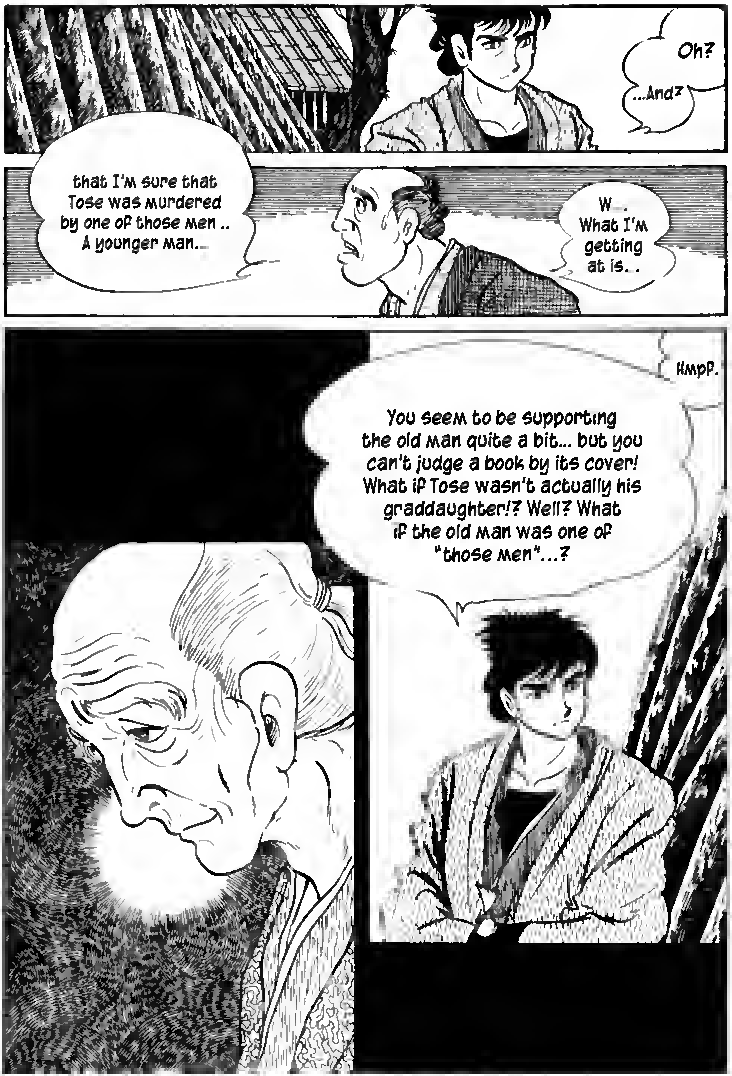
...It's like Tose is alive and standing there!
Don't you think that Tose is just waiting behind it, pretending to be a doll?
No, that's ridiculous!
Haha ha...
Heh heh he..
Actually, speaking of Tose... good sir,
Where is she...? I haven't seen her at all today...

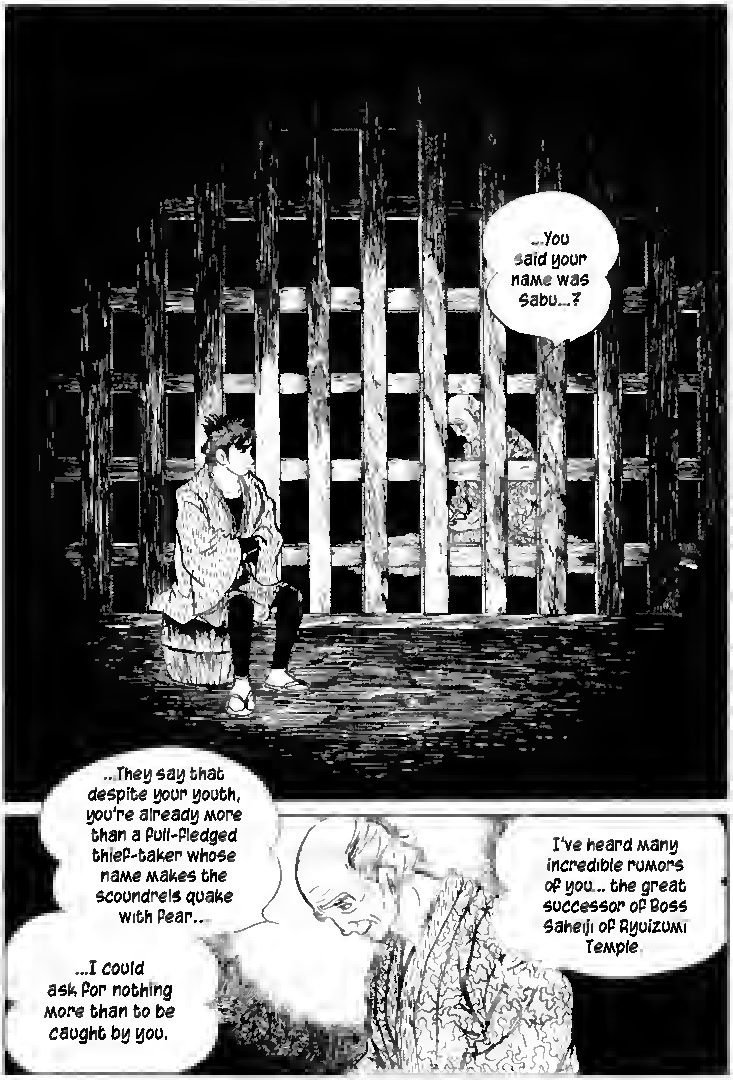
Oh, nothing.
She went to visit her relatives in Nakegome...
She thought she'd stretch herself out for two or three days.
Now while Tose may be my granddaughter, she's still a young maiden at heart.
It'd be a pity if I made her take care of her grandfather all year long.
Yes... I see, but... You mentioned her taking care of her grandfather...
But wouldn't it be easy for someone to take care of you?
You could have all the maidens of the town coma running to you, from just one massage...
.....
After all, you're not only rich and gentle...
You're just as healthy as a man in his prime.
On top of that, you're also tidy and have such outstanding hobbies .. Hehhe.
.. I most honestly say... that the chrysenthemum dolls you make...
always provide recreation for our eyes every single year.

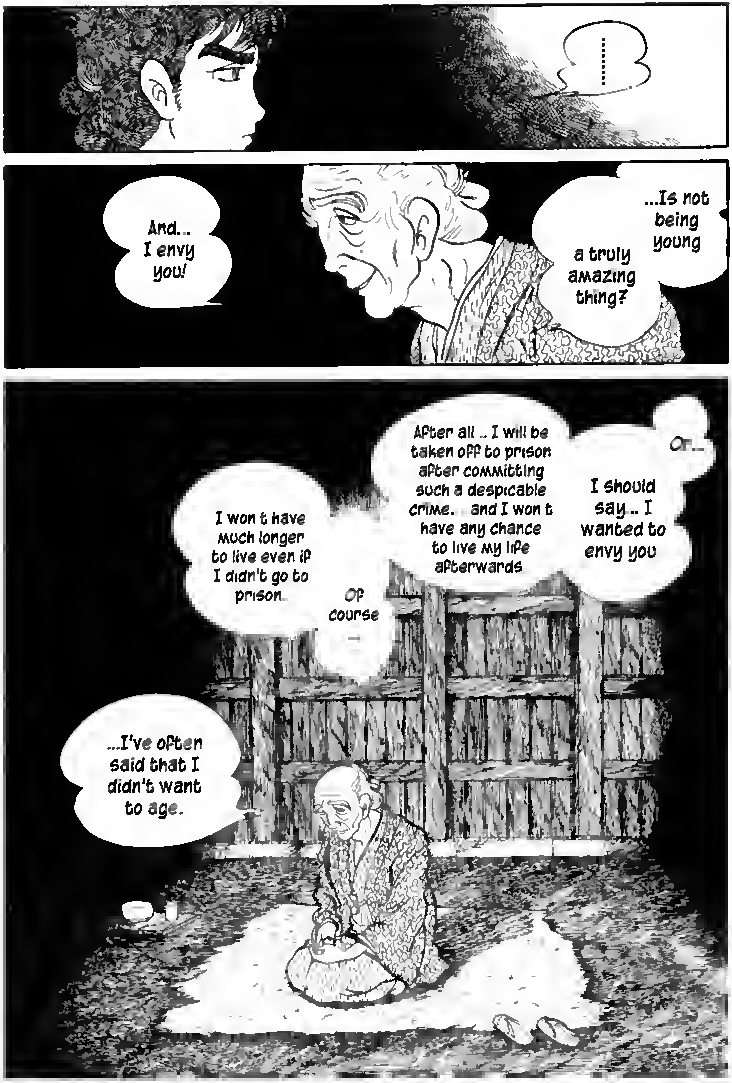

Aieeeeeeeee!!
B... Blood!!
Huh?
The chrysanthemum doll's
bosom is bleeding...!!
Huh?

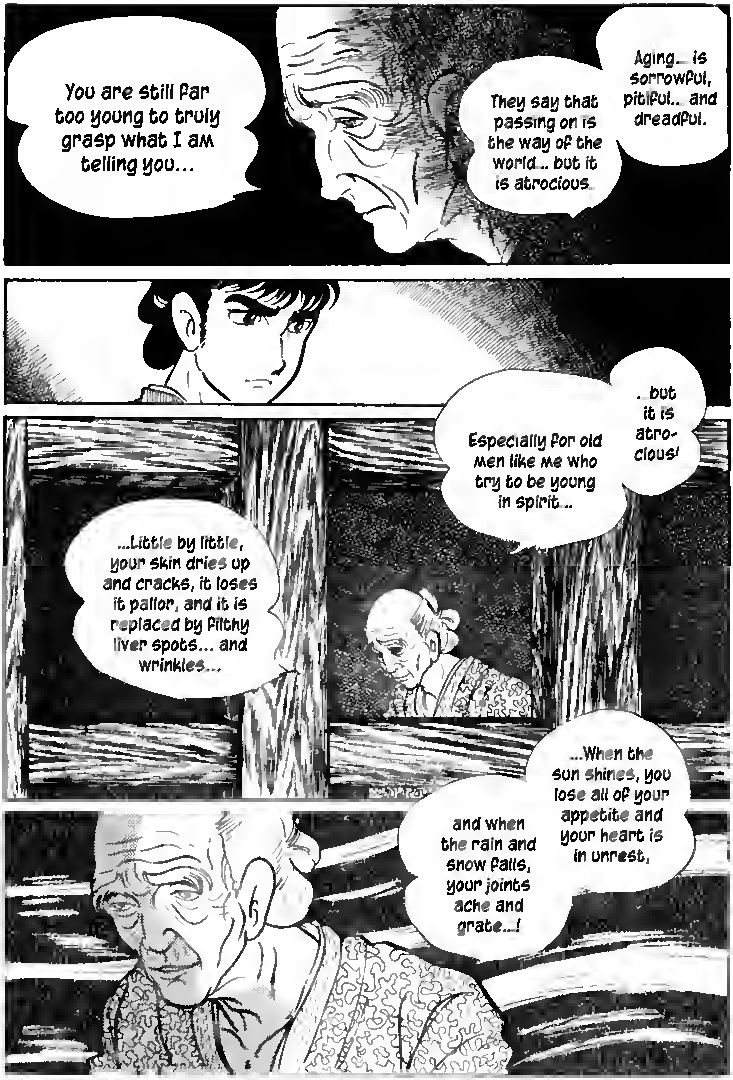
I murdered Tose... and made her into a chrysanthemum doll.
Yes.
...My deepest apologies.

N-No...
No, that can't be!!
That's a lie!!...
I-I just can't accept... that such a peaceful, gentle retired old man... killed her!!
...But... Tose, his granddaughter... she was reputed to have man troubles throughout the neighborhood.
Not to speak ill of the dead.
And...
How should I say this...
He's got to be..
covering for someone!

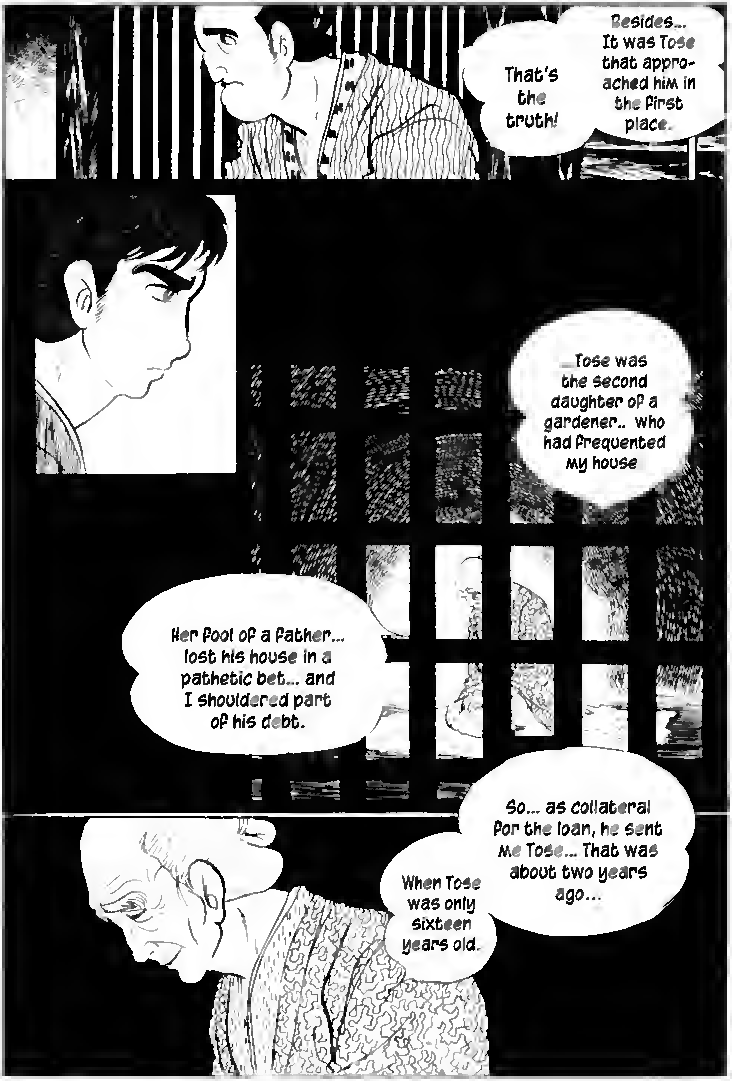

Oh?
...And?
that I'm sure that Tose was murdered by one of those men .. A younger man...
W... What I'm getting at is...
Hmpf.
You seem to be supporting the old man quite a bit... but you can't judge a book by its cover! What if Tose wasn't actually his granddaughter!? Well? What if the old man was one of "those men"...?


...You said your name was Sabu...?
...They say that despite your youth, you're already more than a full-fledged thief-taker whose name makes the scoundrels quake with fear...
...I could ask for nothing more than to be caught by you.
I've heard many incredible rumors of you... the great successor of Boss Saheiji of Ryuizumi Temple

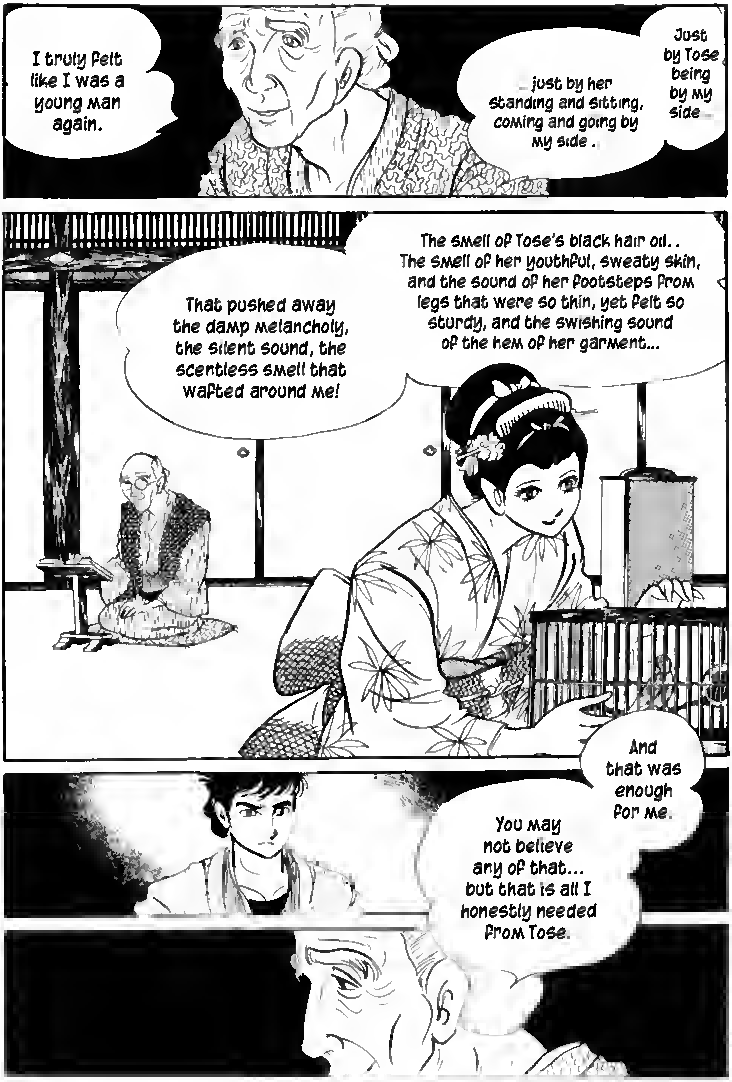

...
And... I envy you!
...Is not being young a truly amazing thing?
...I've often said that I didn't want to age.
I won't have much longer to live even if I didn't go to prison.
Of course...
After all... I will be taken off to prison after committing such a despicable crime... and I won't have any chance to live my life afterwards
Or...
I should say... I wanted to envy you


You are still far too young to truly grasp what I am telling you...
They say that passing on is the way of the world... but it is atrocious.
Aging... is sorrowful, pitiful... and dreadful.
. but it is atrocious!
Especially for old men like me who try to be young in spirit ..
...Little by little, your skin dries up and cracks, it loses it pallor, and it is replaced by filthy liver spots... and wrinkles...
...When the sun shines, you lose all of your appetite and your heart is in unrest,
and when the rain and snow falls, your joints ache and grate...!

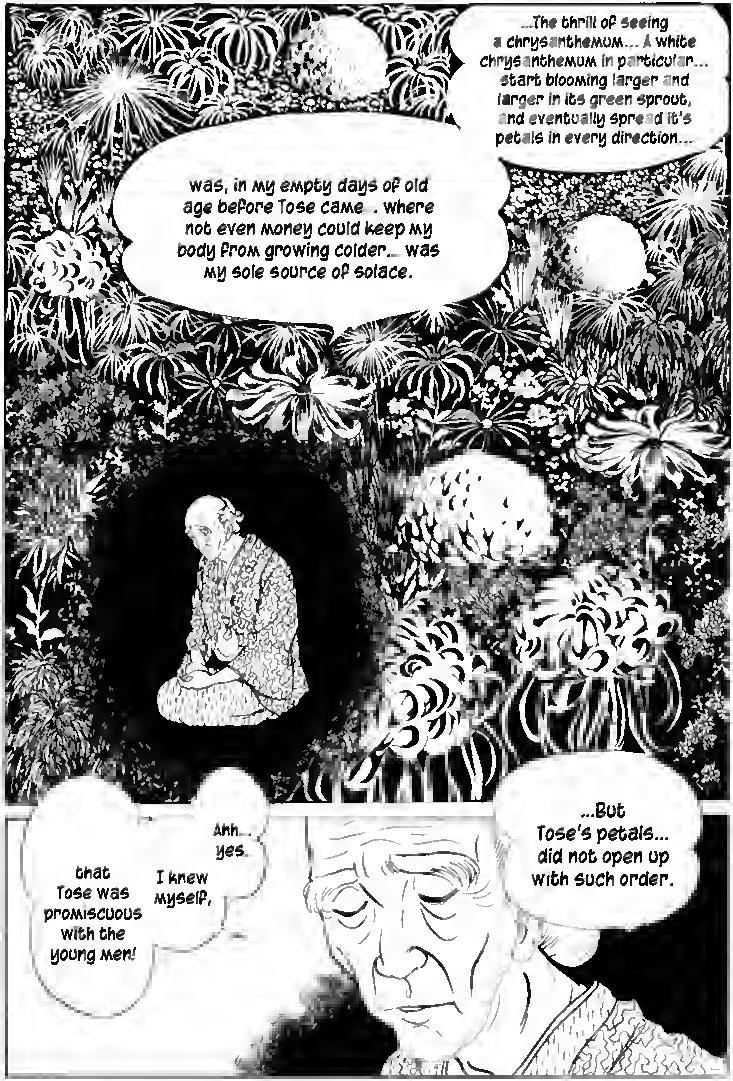
e scene like the Children's Limbo, all grey with a cold wind blowing
And every night, amidst the little sleep you get, you see...
...The weariness only increases, as does limited sleep ... as days drag on...
So,
so I. gathered up all the money I could and hired Tose... to escape this dread!!
Such is the dread and wretchedness... of an old man's life!
Heh.
You're correct. I... knew that Tose wasn't really his granddaughter.
Tose told me.


That's the truth!
Besides... It was Tose that approached him in the first place.
...Tose was the second daughter of a gardener.. who had frequented my house
Her fool of a father... lost his house in a pathetic bet... and I shouldered part of his debt.
So... as collateral for the loan, he sent me Tose... That was about two years ago...
When Tose was only sixteen years old.

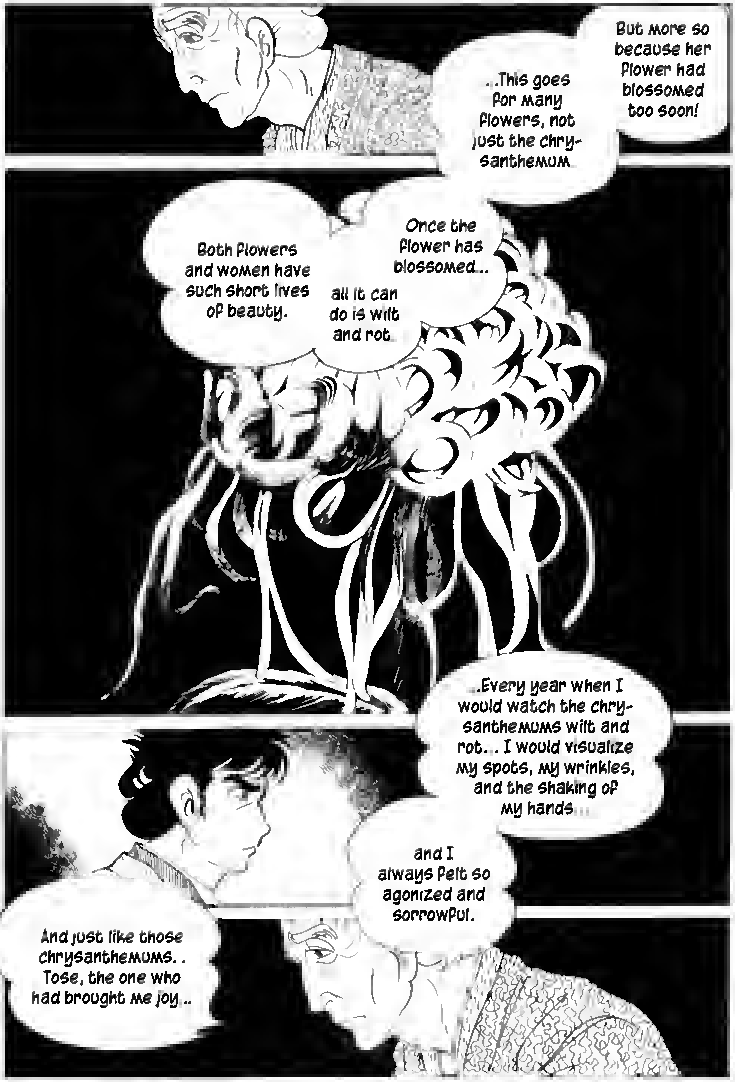
She was bursting with youth and vibrant with beauty .. Yes, Tose was truly an incredible maiden.
I... was a little hesitant at first to mention my age when she told me hers..
but in the end... I decided to keep her around as a maid to care for me...
Also...
I had also felt... that keeping such a youthful maiden by my side... may bring me a short retreat from the sorrows of aging...
And... it was just as I had thought...


I truly felt like I was a young man again.
...just by her standing and sitting, coming and going by my side.
Just by Tose being by my side...
The smell of Tose's black hair oil.. The smell of her youthful, sweaty skin, and the sound of her footsteps from legs that were so thin, yet felt so sturdy, and the swishing sound of the hem of her garment...
That pushed away the damp melancholy, the silent sound, the scentless smell that wafted around me!
And that was enough for me.
You may not believe any of that... but that is all I honestly needed from Tose.

That is what Tose said as well.
Y-Yes.
She mentioned that he never touched her.
No.
I was at my house.. the night Tose was murdered...
T-That's why, well...
she ended up starting to entice me...
Watching Tose's growth, For me... Was just as exciting as watching a chrysanthemum you worked so tirelessly to grow beautifully blossom.
...Yes.


...The thrill of seeing a chrysanthemum... A white chrysanthemum in particular... start blooming larger and larger in its green sprout, and eventually spread it's petals in every direction...
was, in my empty days of old age before Tose came . where not even money could keep my body from growing colder... was my sole source of solace.
...But Tose's petals... did not open up with such order.
Ahh... yes.
I knew myself,
that Tose was promiscuous with the young men!

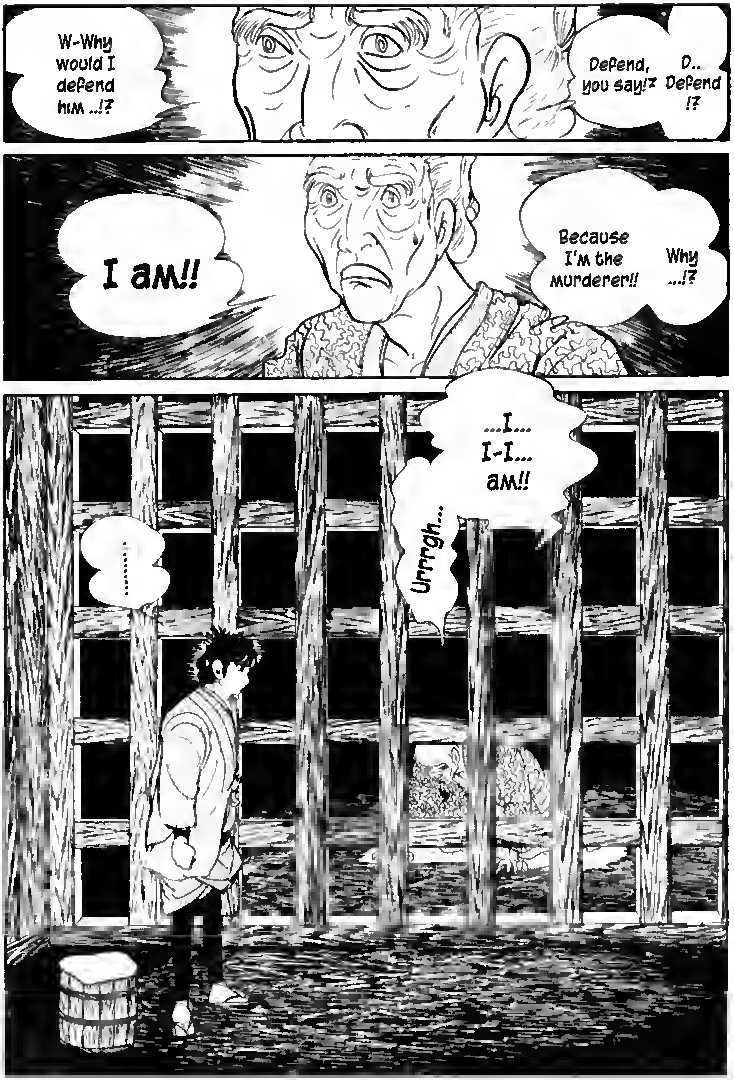
She was quite the maiden!
But why? Why?
Tose... had such an angelic face.
To tell the truth, I was with another maiden... It's true. She'll tell you.
That night?
Heh he...
...I was engulfed by sorrow ...!
Yes,
partly because she did such things behind my back...


..This goes for many flowers, not just the chrysanthemum
But more so because her flower had blossomed too soon!
Both flowers and women have such short lives of beauty.
Once the flower has blossomed...
all it can do is wilt and rot.
..Every year when I would watch the chrysanthemums wilt and rot... I would visualize my spots, my wrinkles, and the shaking of my hands...
and I always felt so agonized and sorrowful.
And just like those chrysanthemums.. Tose, the one who had brought me joy..

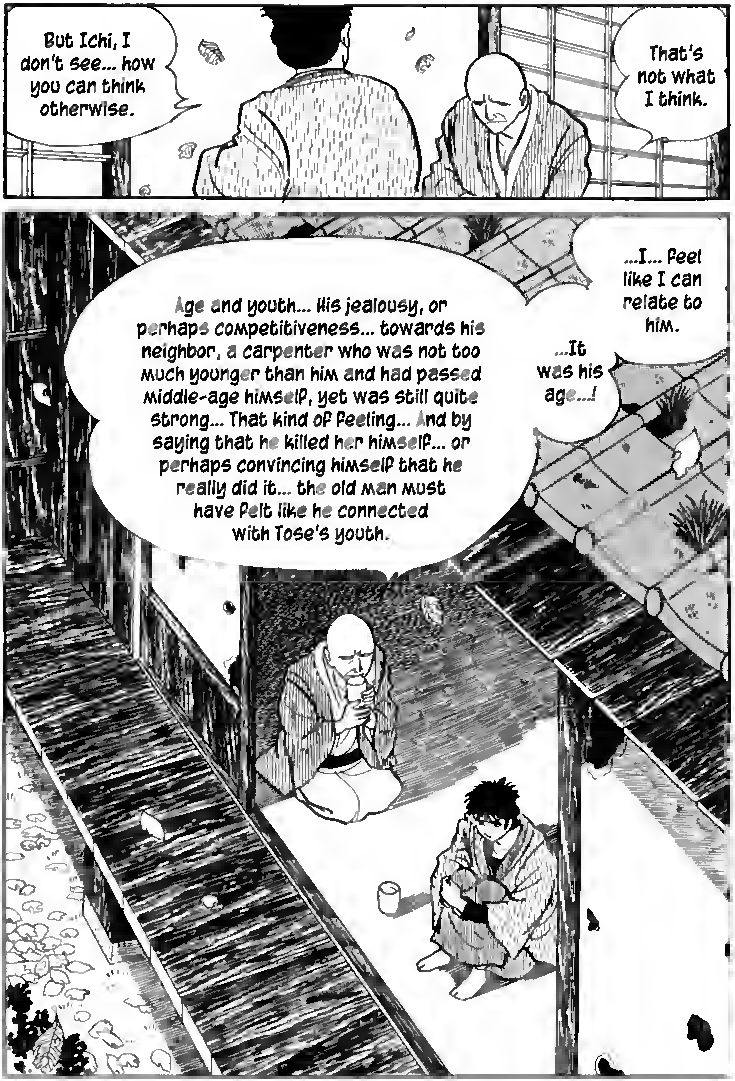
...And so I killed Tose!
And so...
When I thought about that... I was gripped by a dreadful feeling... that I could not shake!
...You mustn't lie, old man!
Huh ?

Why would you forge such a lie?
I've already got the story straight...
and I just brought in her real murderer!
W...
What was that!?
...Toragoro, the carpenter's foreman who lives next to your retirement home,
he's the murderer!
...I decided to go over it again so I relied on neighborhood rumors
and questioned every single man that might have been with the victim.
But.. Toragoro
at first seemed overly defensive of you. .

He started talking more and more incoherently.
But after checking out rumors, and obtaining a witness of their rendezvous, I questioned him in search of answers... and, well, dishonesty doesn't pay.
and when I was snooping around the storeroom in his house I found a chisel covered in blood... He couldn't flee from the truth!
the stab wound in the victim's breast seemed like it came from a carpenter's chisel.
On top of that,
I-I... I murdered Tose!!
It's not true!!
It's not true!!
I...
Tch!!
Toragoro's already confessed to it...
You're still going on about that...?
...That son of a bitch was a spoiled child... got real enamored with Tose... and snepped when he learned that she was fornicating with other men...
...So why would you defend that bastard?


W-Why would I defend him ...!?
Defend, you say!?
D.. Defend !?
I am!!
Because I'm the murderer!!
Why ...!?
...I... I-I... am!!
Urrrgh...
.....

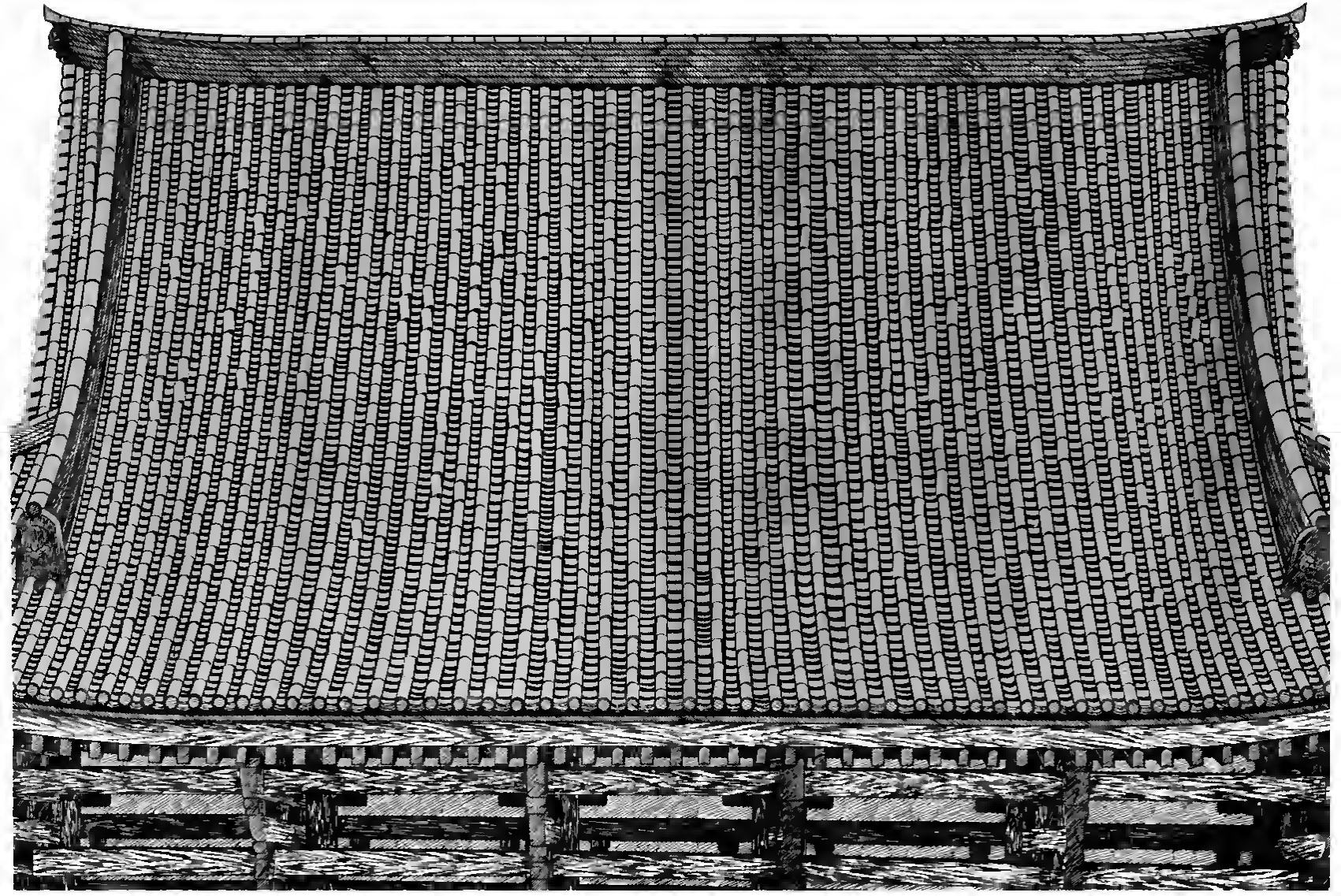
...So, what... happened in the end?
Well, of course!
Toragoro was the killer!
The only crime the old man committed... was discovering the body in his garden... and turning it into a chrysanthemum doll instead of reporting it to the guardhouse...
But given his age, they decided he must have been senile,
so they released him without charge!
He really put me through a lot of trouble.
I'll bet that he really was senile.
...No.


But Ichi, I don't see... how you can think otherwise.
That's not what I think.
Age and youth... His jealousy, or perhaps competitiveness... towards his neighbor, a carpenter who was not too much younger than him and had passed middle-age himself, yet was still quite strong... That kind of feeling... And by saying that he killed her himself... or perhaps convincing himself that he really did it... the old man must have felt like he connected with Tose's youth.
...It was his age...!
...I... feel like I can relate to him.

...How tragic...
November 1970
"Chrysanthemum Doll" (FIN)

佐武と市捕物控
SABU & ICHI
CHAPTER 51
PRESENTED BY
HOKUTO NO GUN
AND
HAPPY SCANS
TRANSLATED BY
SYSTEMATICCHAOS
CLEANED BY
WRIGHT
TYPESETTING BY
KAZUHIKO
PROOFREADING BY
ANGELOFCHAOTIX
CREDITS PAGE
BY TROBMAN
WRITTEN BY
ISHINOMORI
SHÔTARÔ

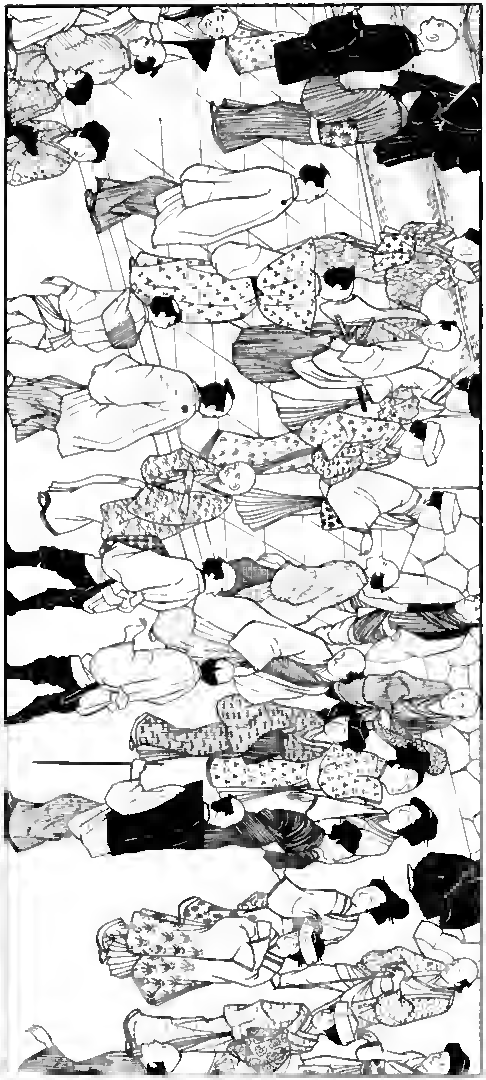
Chapter 52: Dadabudabu

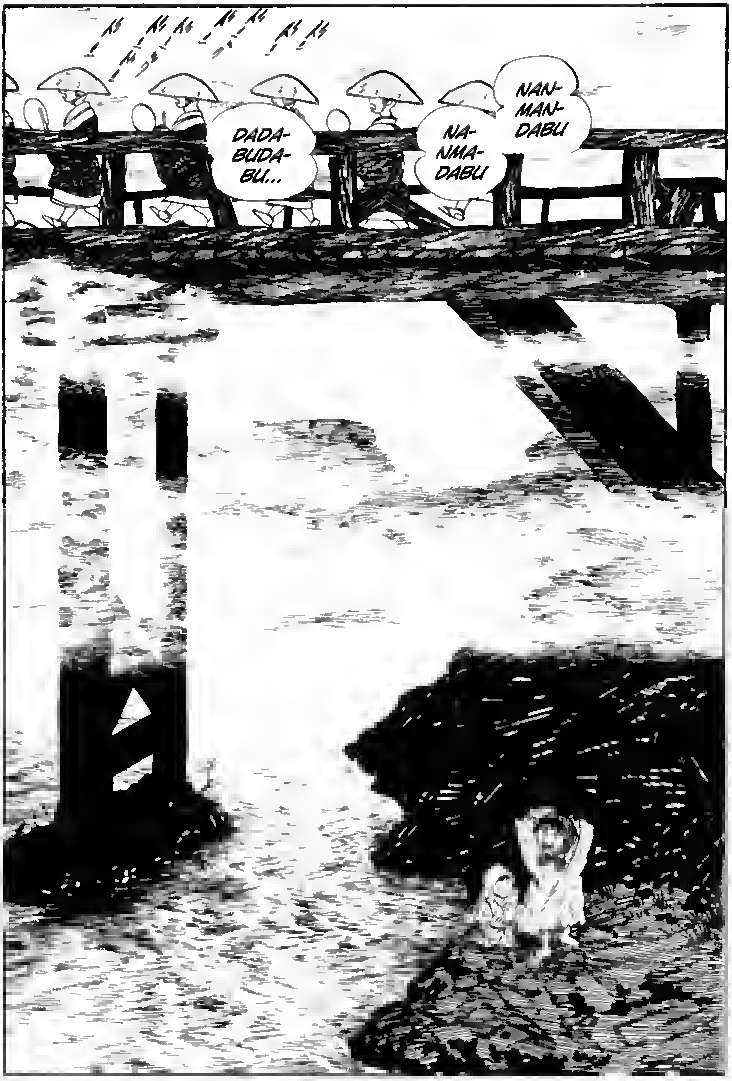


233 TEMPLES OF THE PURE LAND SECT, 199 TEMPLES OF THE NICHIREN SECT (CONTINUED NOTES OF THE CITY OF EDO). AS YOU CAN TELL BY THE NUMBER OF TEMPLES, THE PURE LAND AND NICHIREN SECTS FLOURISHED IN EDO.

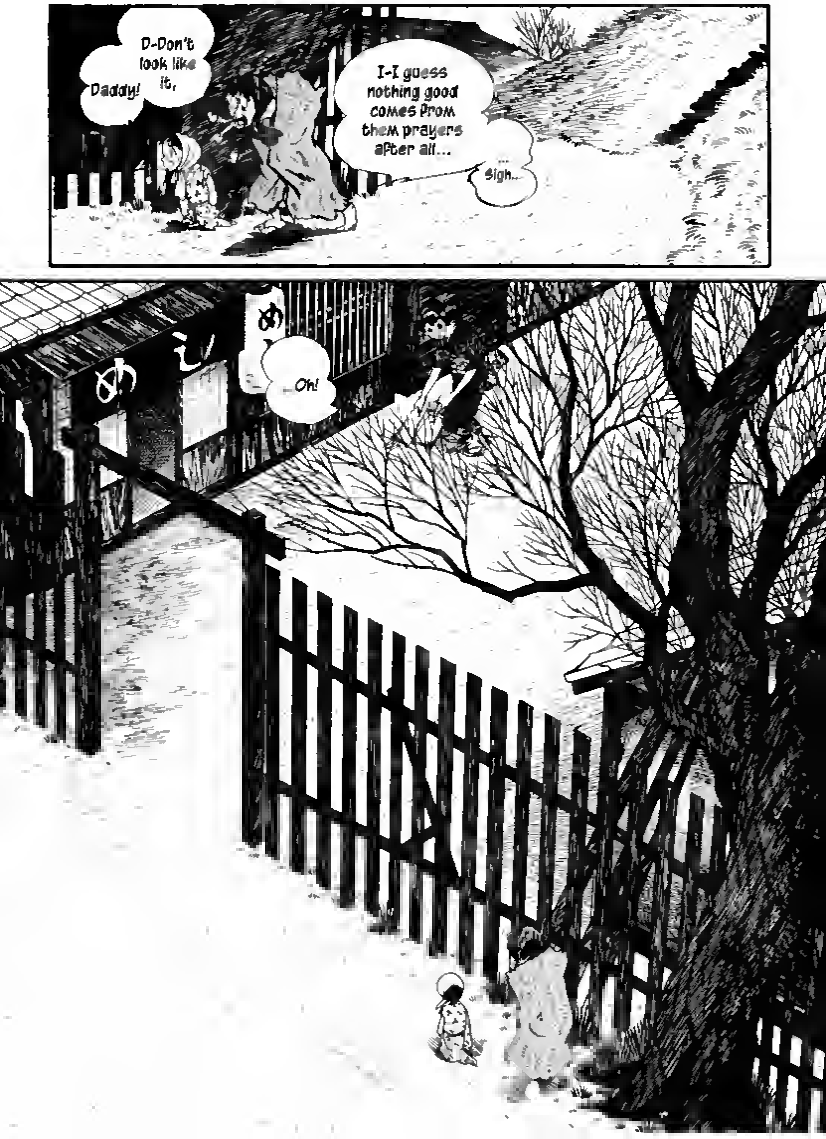
THE SERVICE ON OCTOBER 13 (NOVEMBER BY MODERN RECKONING) WAS THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE SAINT NICHIREN, AND EVEN FROM THE 8TH, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE UMBRELLA LECTURE, STARTING WITH HONMON TEMPLE IN IKENOUE, HOMYO TEMPLE OF ZOSHIGAYA, AND MYOHO TEMPLE OF HORINOUCHI, THE EXCITEMENT WAS SO GREAT, IT WAS SAID THAT IT COULD RIGHTFULLY BE CALLED ONE OF EDO'S SEASONS.

OCTOBER 13TH, STEP, STEP, HORSE-DUNG, *DADABUDABU*

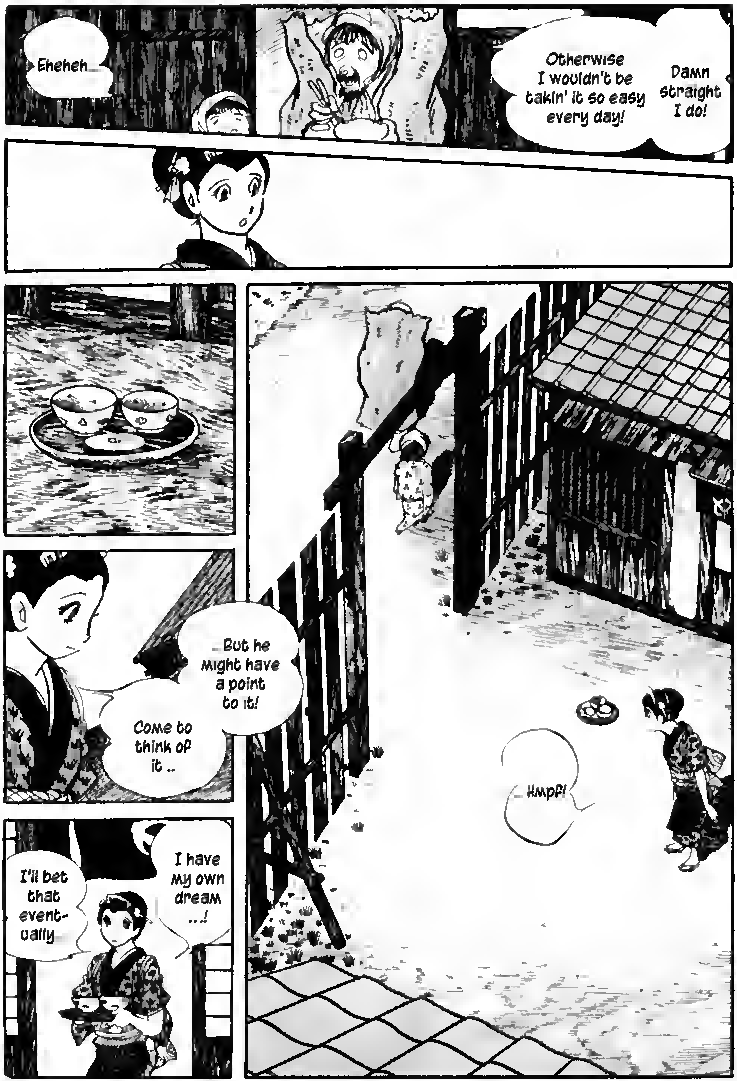



DADA-BUDA-BU...
NA-NMA-DABU
NAN-MAN-DABU

...DA-DABU-DABU...
Eeek!


D-Don't look like it,
Daddy!
I-I guess nothing good comes from them prayers after all...
...Sigh...
Oh!

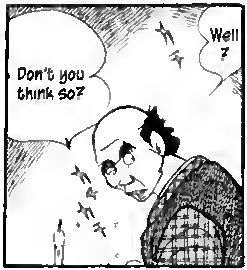
It looks like something happened to you two.
Wait right there.
Heh... he...
...Lady, yer... Munch Munch... a real great woman... Munch...
...I'll bet something great's gonna happen to ya real soon!
Teehee-hee... I hope you're right.
I feel as if nothing good ever happens to me!
Sorry to impose on ya.
Yup!
Please, come on in.
And when I do, you'll be the first one I...
Soon, I'll stumble over some money and get rich!
Take me, for instance...
It will!
No, that ain't true!
Do you honestly believe that?
Well, that's quite the promise

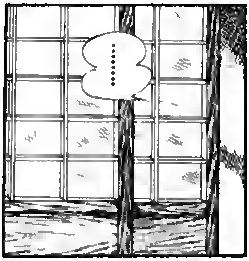

Eheheh...
Otherwise I wouldn't be takin' it so easy every day!
Damn straight I do!
...But he might have a point to it!
Come to think of it ..
...Hmph!
I'll bet that event-ually...
I have my own dream ...!

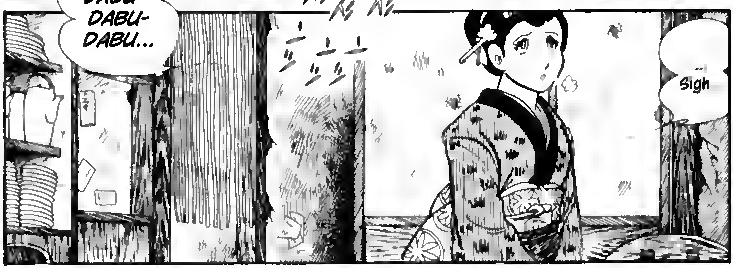
Handsome...
Strapping...
A young...
Wealthy...
And gentleman... would come my way...
But...
Ah!
Father...
Are you still entertaining those beggars...!?
Machi!

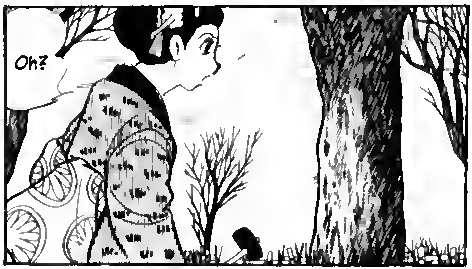
.....
Listen here. You're going to become a wife in a mansion soon.
You're not going to be in a position when you can talk to those kinds so casually!
And you need to start thinking about that!
...Oh! Come to think of it..
Weren't you going to visit the mansion today?
Yes, Father.
Make sure the Master isn't displeased by you!
Go wash your hair and dress up.
Come on.
Don't dawdle.
I have morning duties to tend to...
The only reason we can be happy like this
is because of how strong my faith is...
.....

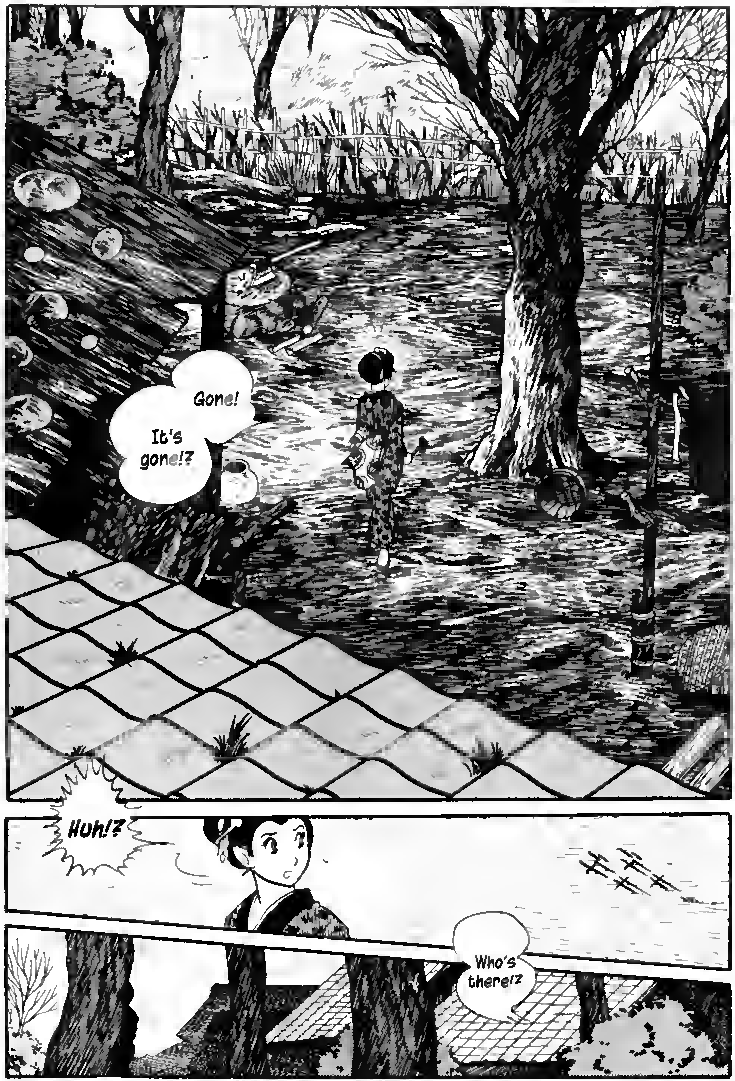
NAAMI-
ABUDA-
ABU.
NA-
MUAMI-
DABU.


Well?
Don't you think so?

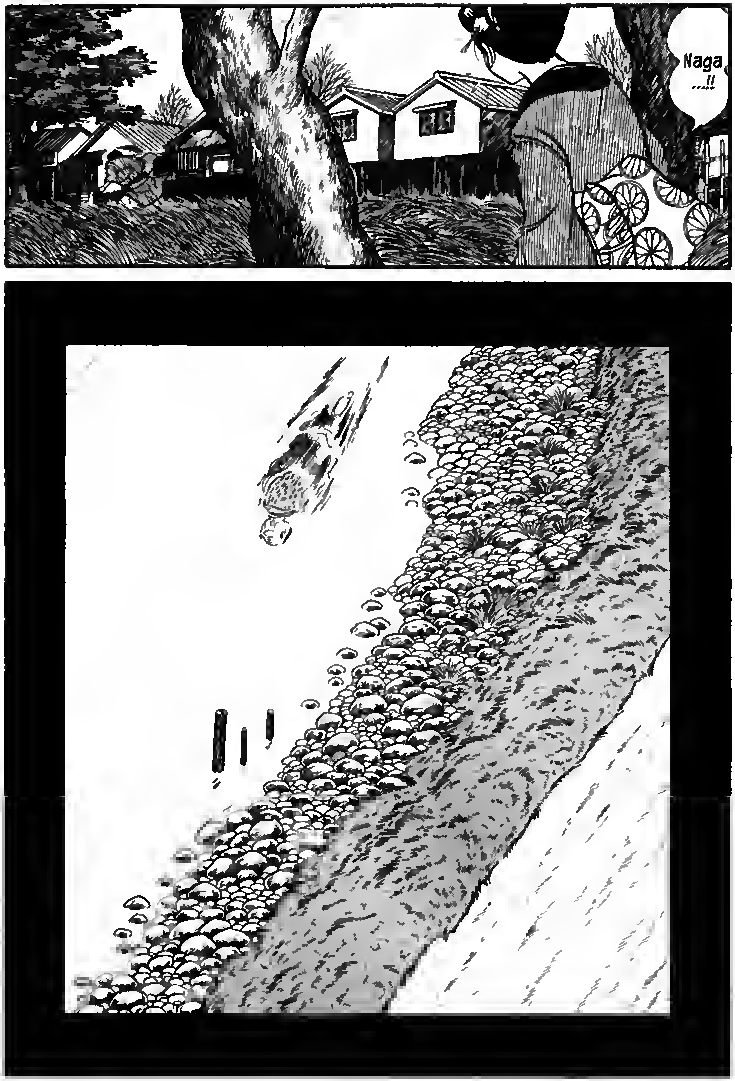

.....


DABU-
DABU-
DABU...
Sigh


Oh?


Gone!
It's gone!?
Huh!?
Who's there!?

W-Who's over there...!?
.....
You're
...Naga-yoshi ...!?
Ah!
Blood ...!?

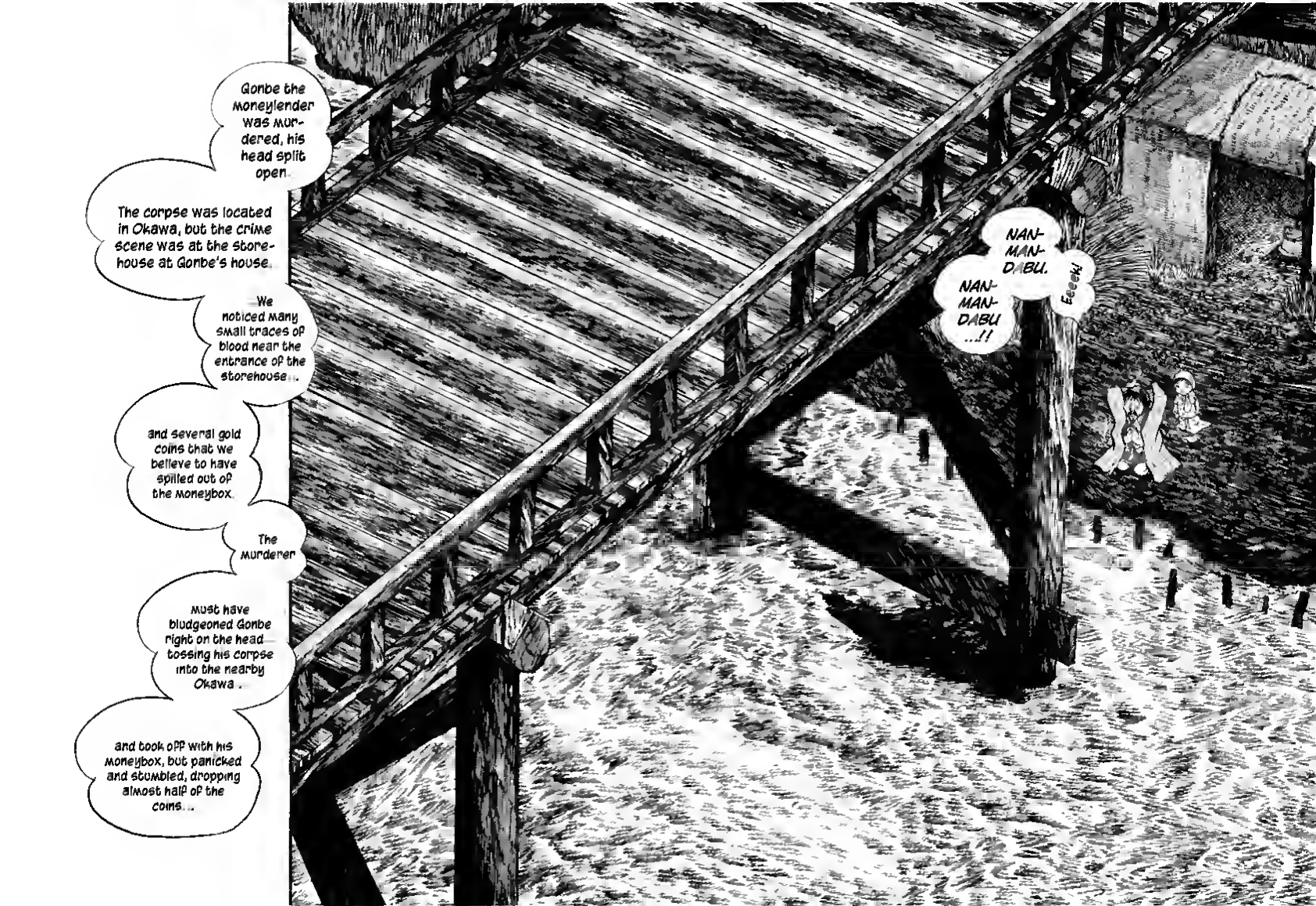

Naga
...!!

ハッハッハッハッハッ
……
？？？

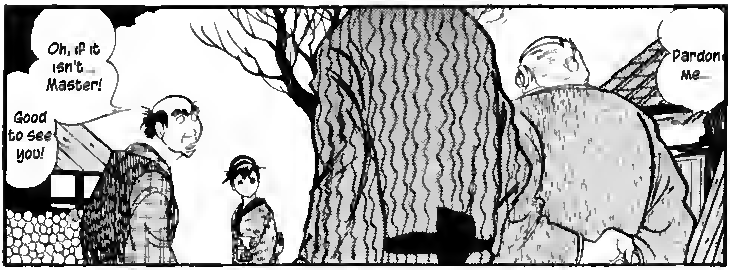
Whoa ..!!
...Eek!
W-Whaddya getting at...?
C-Course it'll be alright...
Y-You really think... we should be doin' this?
D Daddy...

See? See?
It's gotta be!
Don'cha think so, too, kid!?
...Listen, kid, this is just
what I was sayin' when I mentioned pennies from heaven... It's a gift from Heaven!
D...D-Daddy!!
Eek!
D.. Don't scream like that
Y-You startled me...
They wouldn't give a moment's thought... over this measly cash!
C-Come on, there was enough money in there to rot!
Y.. Yeah, but...
W-What the hell is goin'...!?
.....

Eeek ...!!
T-T-T-The moneylender Gonbe... came back for his money!!
ユラーリ
... Daddy,
Mr. Gonbe... is dead!
Eeek! F-Forgive me!
I-I'll give back yer money!
Huh?
Corpse!?
Huh ...?
Oh, so this is just a corpse?

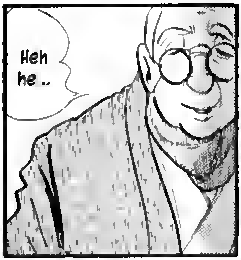

Gonbe the moneylender was murdered, his head split open.
The corpse was located in Okawa, but the crime scene was at the storehouse at Gonbe's house.
We noticed many small traces of blood near the entrance of the storehouse...
and several gold coins that we believe to have spilled out of the moneybox.
The murderer
must have bludgeoned Gonbe right on the head tossing his corpse into the nearby Okawa.
and took off with his moneybox, but panicked and stumbled, dropping almost half of the coins...
NAN-MAN-DABU.
Eeeek!
NAN-MAN-DABU ...!!

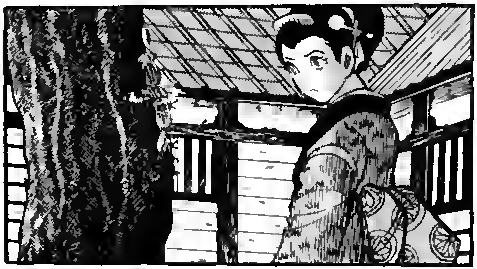
We have belief that the murderer was a simple thief...
but given his profession of moneylending, the "grudge" angle is hard to abandon.
Machi, you're still hanging that accursed thing up...!?
But...
...This has the exact same meaning to me...
as your prayers do to you, Father.
Kch, ridiculous! Don't lump that together with my prayers!


Oh, if it isn't... Master!
Good to see you!
Pardon me...

Y... Yes

You shouldn't have had to come all the way here...
I would've visited your place if I had some business with you...
Well, come on in...
Hey, Machi!
Bring some tea for the Master... right away!


Heh he..



.....

HMPF!
.....
...Come right on in!
...Alright, Mr. Risuke, we'll arrange it like that...
y- Yes.
Ehehe... My daughter and I are both truly happy... that you would turn your eye to us...
.....

...We are very pleased about this, and what is to come...
... Hmpf!
Well... Naga-yoshi?
...Heh he...
.....

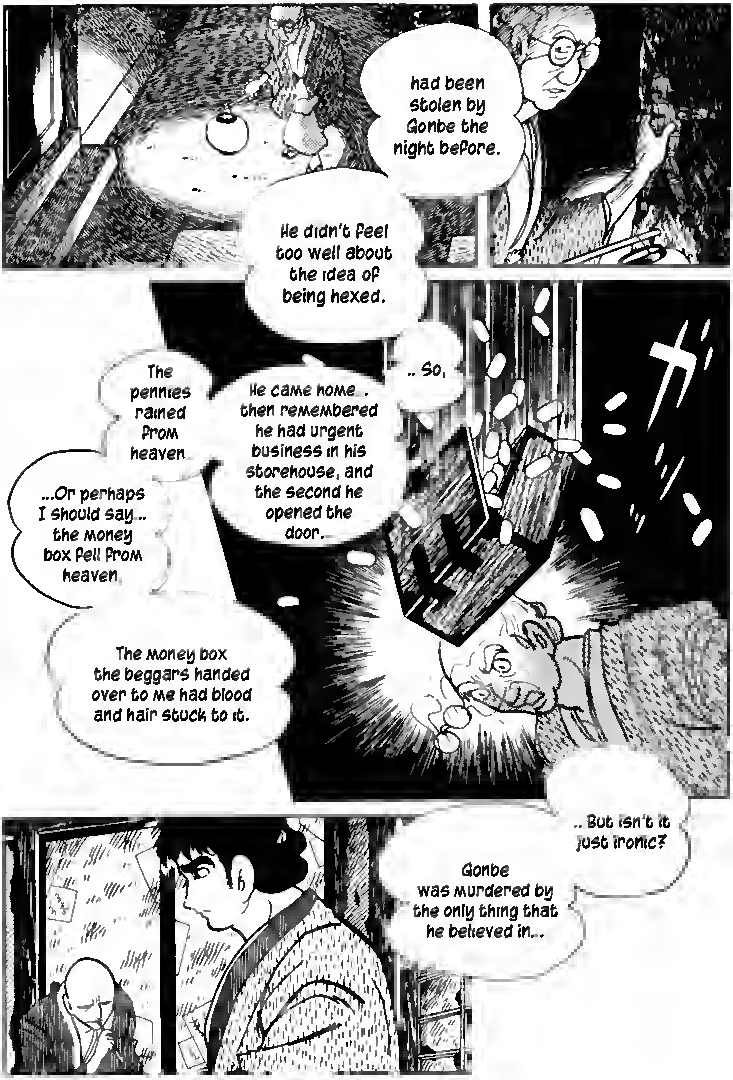
You can do anything you desire if you have the money!
Everything in this world runs on money!
Now you should understand
..Even at my age... I can acquire the prettiest belle in the entire town as my bride, because I have the money!
...Ever since I was a child. .
I believed that I would surely save money if I kept it in a high place...
so I would work as hard as I could.
And look where that got me now!

Also, Naga-yoshi,
you must trust money alone... Yes, money is all you can believe in...
and you must work with all of the will you can!
..I thought that Gonba's one and only (I should call him Gonbe the Miser) shop boy, Nagayoshi,
was the most suspicious
Because he had secretly..
pledged his heart to Machi of the eatery, who was to be wedded off as collateral for a loan
that very morning
Machi had seen him loitering around her house, covered in blood,
And what's more...
shows that she didn't care much for Nagayoshi
Judging by the fact that Machi had simply told you the truth,
...Hmpf.

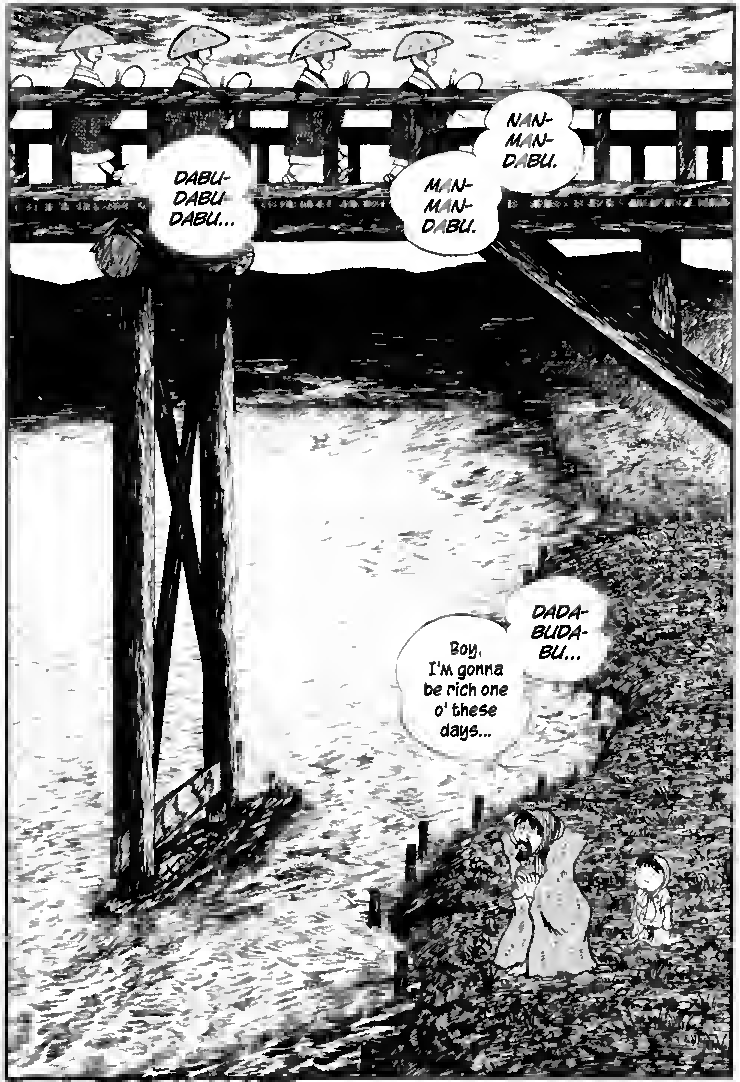
...But Machi seems suspicious as well.
Of course she didn't.
Nagayoshi is a bland, boney kid, recognizable only for his freckles and bug eyes.
If that's true, then Machi's father is suspicious.
He probably yells day in and out to hide his own timidity.
So she obviously wasn't being wed to Gonbe out of choice.
She may have an innocent face, but she was driving a stake into a straw doll... and casting curses on it...
He couldn't have been such an oblivious fool to not know... that his daughter was displeased with her engagement...
But there's one more...
The beggar and his son under the bridge, who first found the body... He was so fidgety that I questioned him...
and he immediately admitted to stealing the money box.

I-It's freez-ing...
Look over there!!
...It's pennies from heaven!!
Turns out that's the truth after all!
M... Master ..!?

Huh ...!?
.....
But the straw doll...
Nagayoshi jumped to the conclusion that Machi had killed him, so he threw the body into the Okawa to hide the evidence...
...After seeing the straw doll in Gonbe's hands...


had been stolen by Gonbe the night before.
He didn't feel too well about the idea of being hexed.
.. So,
He came home.. then remembered he had urgent business in his storehouse, and the second he opened the door..
The pennies rained from heaven
...Or perhaps I should say.. the money box fell from heaven
The money box the beggars handed over to me had blood and hair stuck to it.
.. But isn't it just ironic?
Gonbe was murdered by the only thing that he believed in...

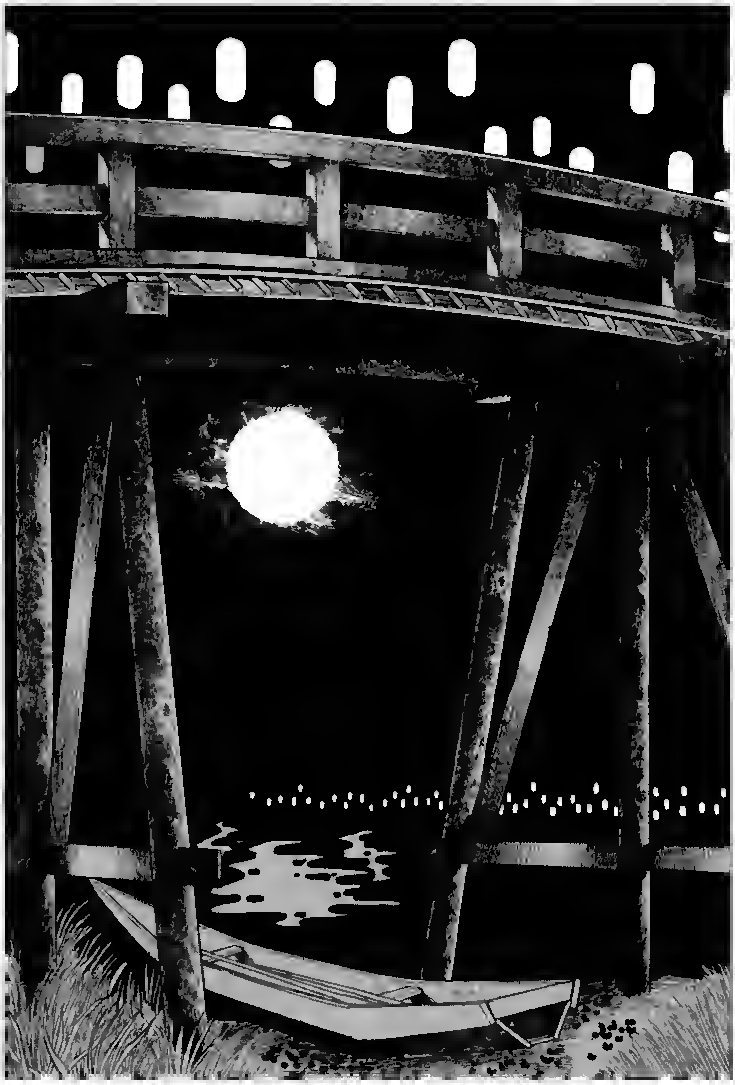
They say that even sardine heads work miracles by faith...
We can't survive without believing... trusting in something.
but that's all because humans are such weak creatures.
Even I... trust in this sword-cane.
...But,
If you are too devout, it will come back around...
...I
..wasn't really cursing anyone in particular.
I just felt that striking the nail made me forget all my worries... and if I kept living that way, then soon enough.
Teeheehee, but looks like it's gone now.

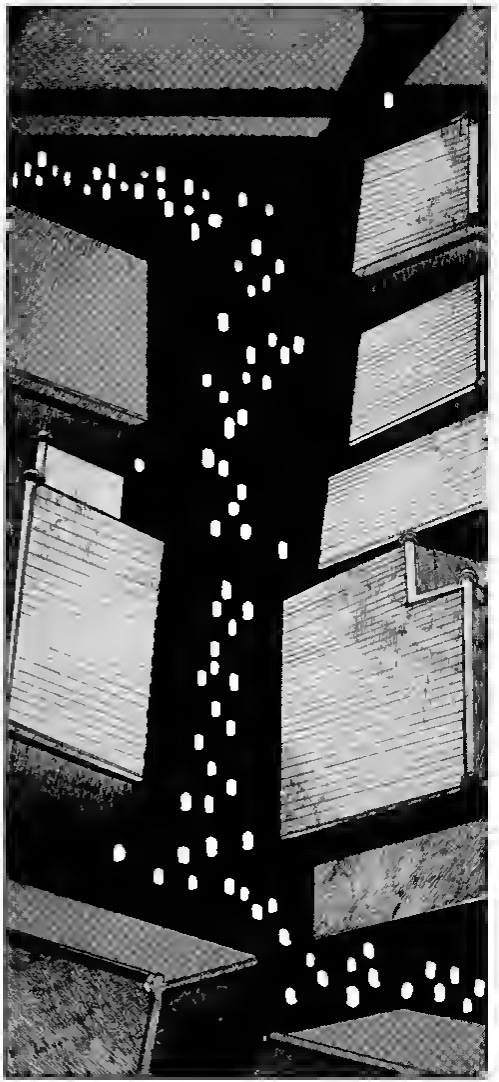


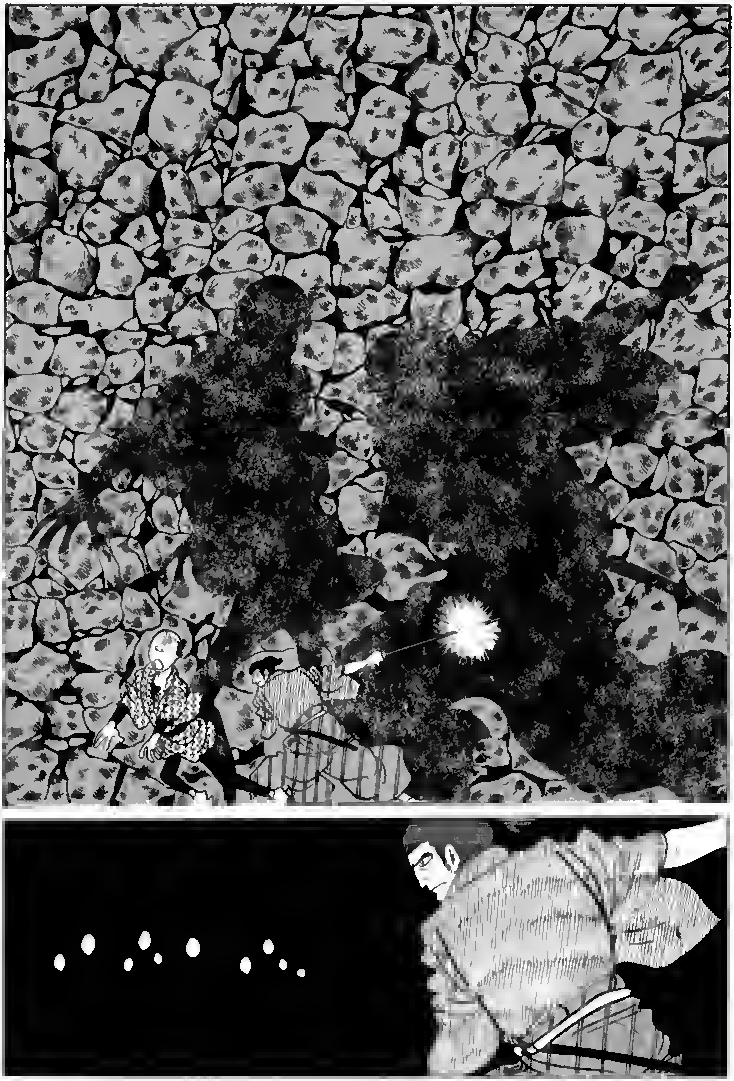
November 1970: *"Dadabudabu"* (FIN)

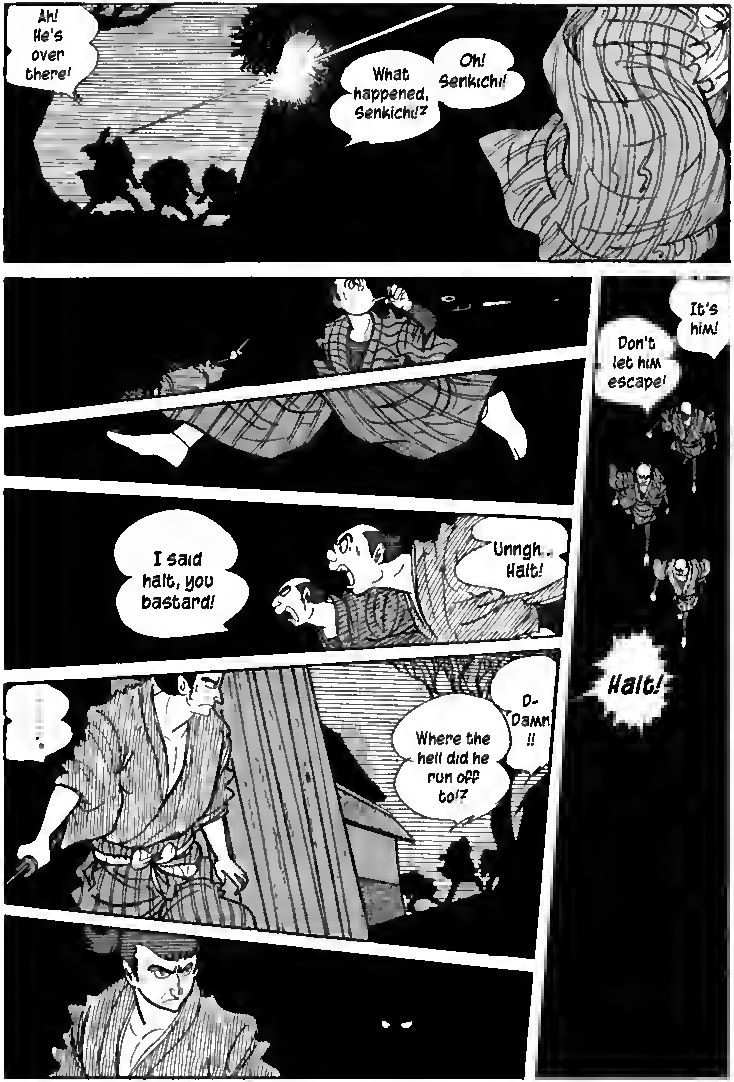
佐武と市捕物控
SABU & ICHI
CHAPTER 52
PRESENTED BY
HOKUTO NO GUN
AND
HAPPY SCANS
TRANSLATED BY
SYSTEMATICCHAOS
CLEANED BY
WRIGHT
TYPESETTING BY
KAZUHIKO
PROOFREADING BY
ANGELOFCHAOTIX
CREDITS PAGE
BY TROBMAN
WRITTEN BY
ISHINOMORI
SHŌTARŌ

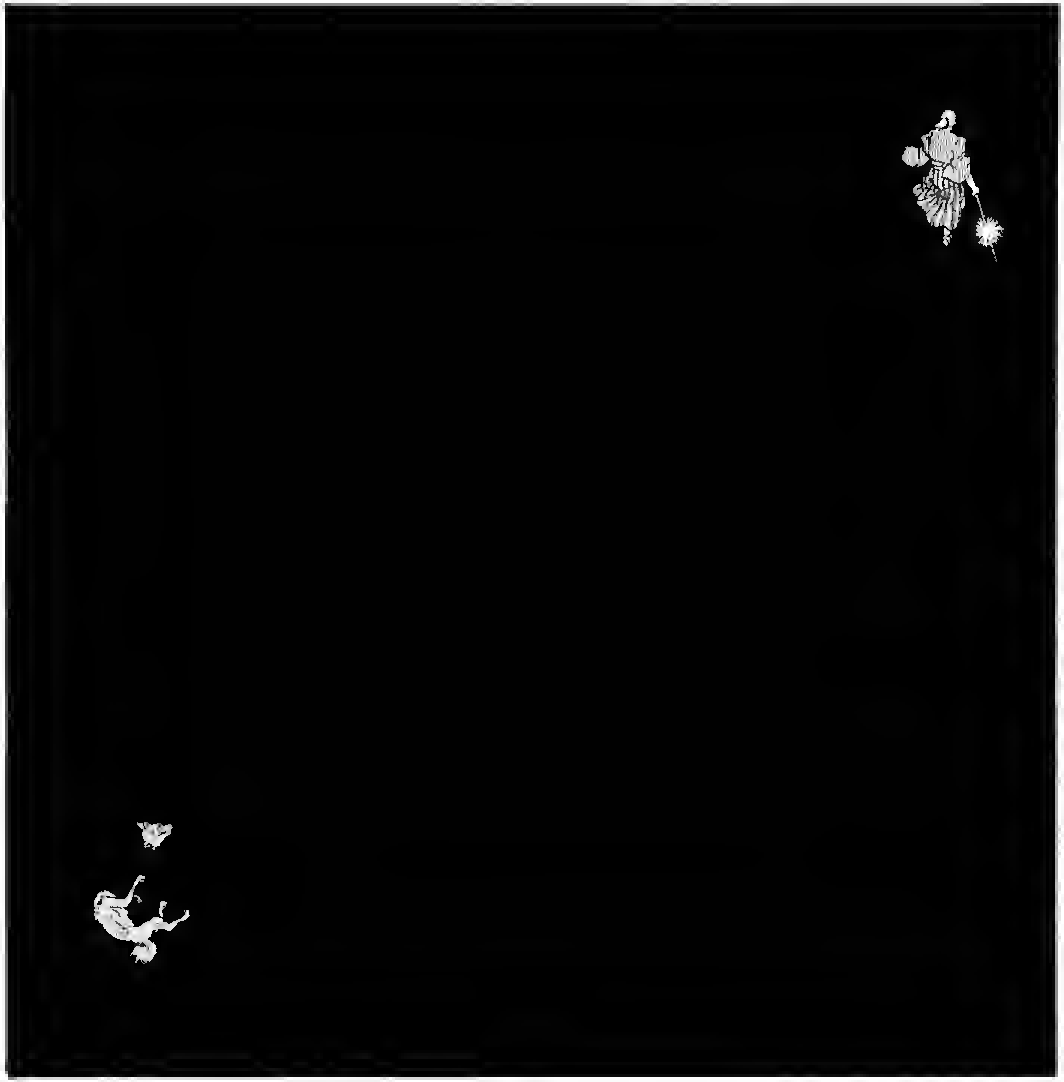
Chapter 53: End of the Year

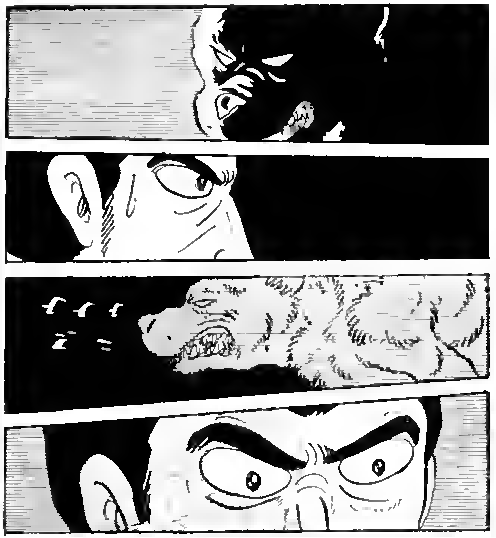


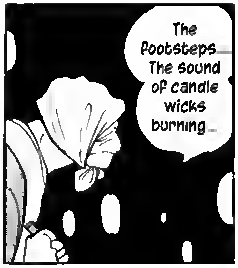





Ah! He's over there!
What happened, Senkichi!?
Oh! Senkichi!
It's him!
Don't let him escape!
Halt!
I said halt, you bastard!
Unngh.. Halt!
D-Damn !!
Where the hell did he run off to!?





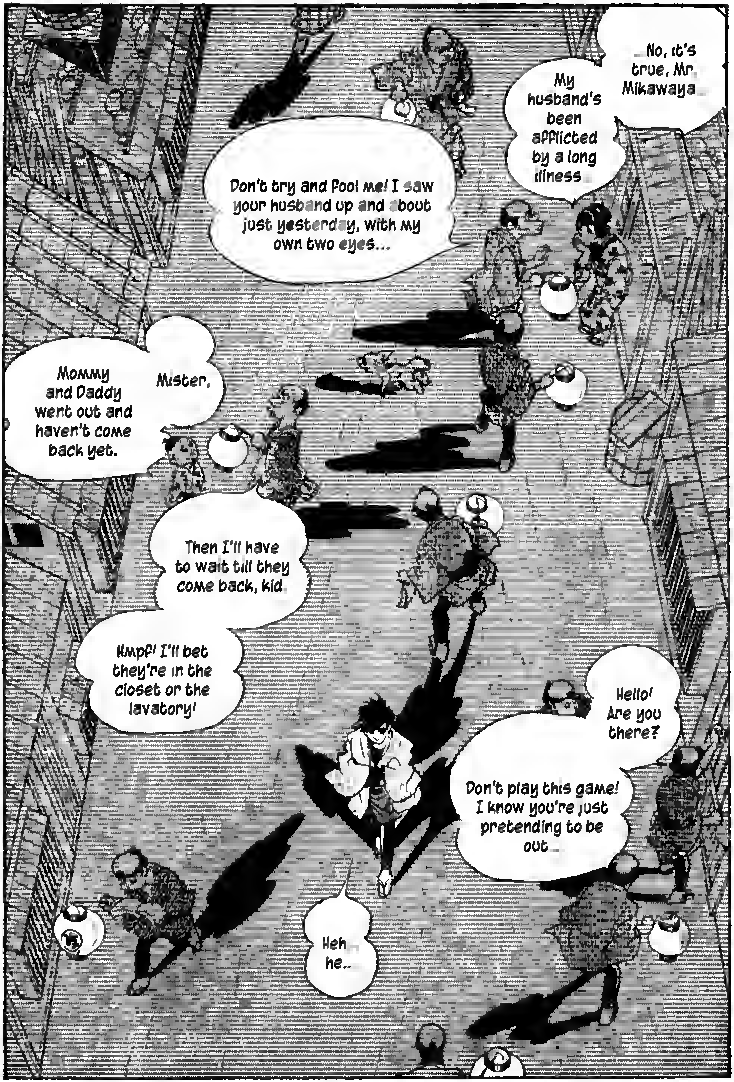

The footsteps... The sound of candle wicks burning...

Hehehe... Sure is busy considering the 108 bells are about to ring.

Heh... he... This means...

Heh...hehe... New Year's Eve, the battle of fireflies...

I won't be able to tell between the bill collectors' lanterns, and the constables' arrest lanterns
I must be getting old.
...My, oh, My...
Either way...
It's getting tougher to spend New Year's Eve...
out in the cold of the town to escape the bill collectors' yearly visits.

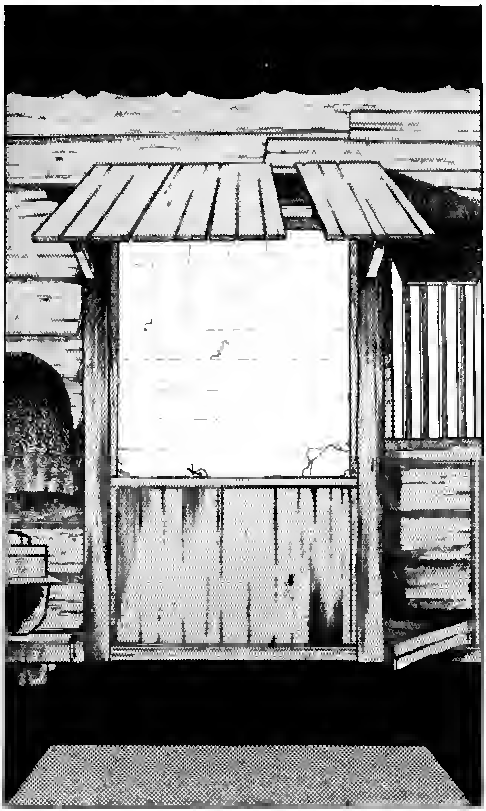

...No, it's true, Mr. Mikawaya...
My husband's been afflicted by a long illness...
Don't try and fool me! I saw your husband up and about just yesterday, with my own two eyes...
Mister, Mommy and Daddy went out and haven't come back yet.
Then I'll have to wait till they come back, kid.
Hmpf! I'll bet they're in the closet or the lavatory!
Hello! Are you there?
Don't play this game! I know you're just pretending to be out...
Heh... he...

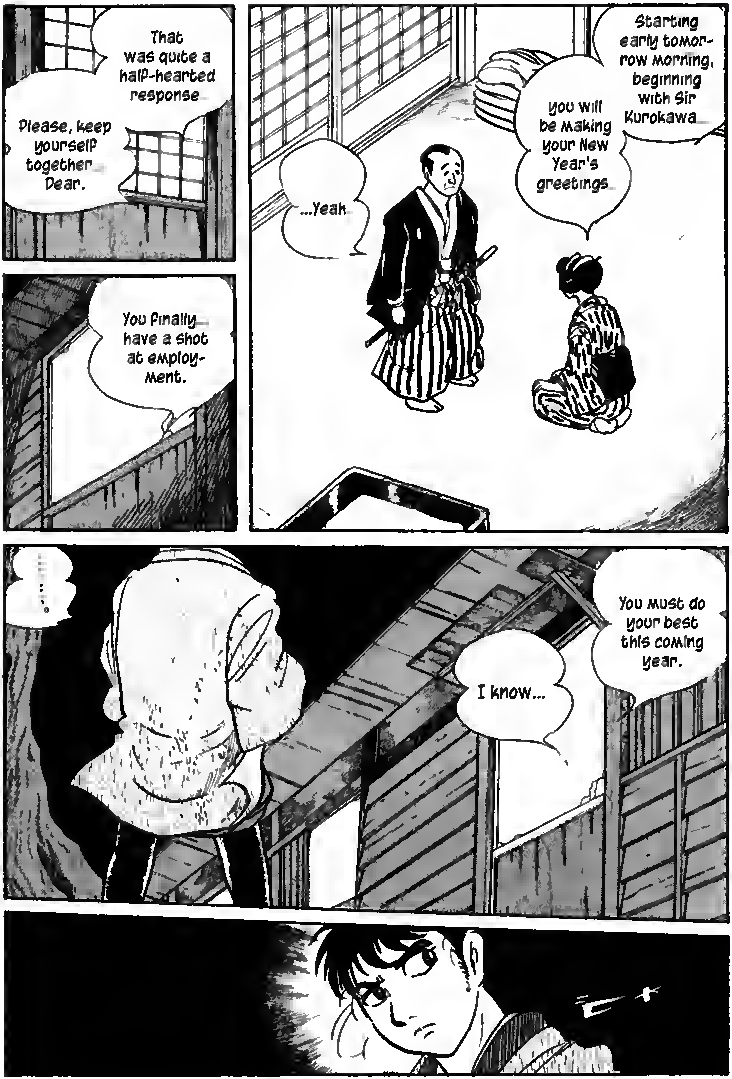
...Al-
right,
then.

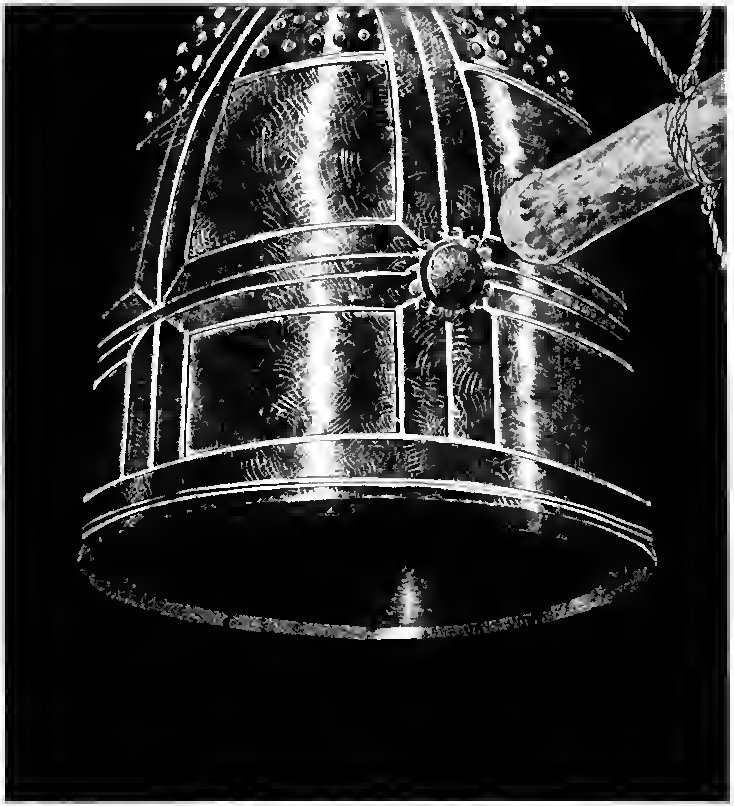
They're
going
at it.

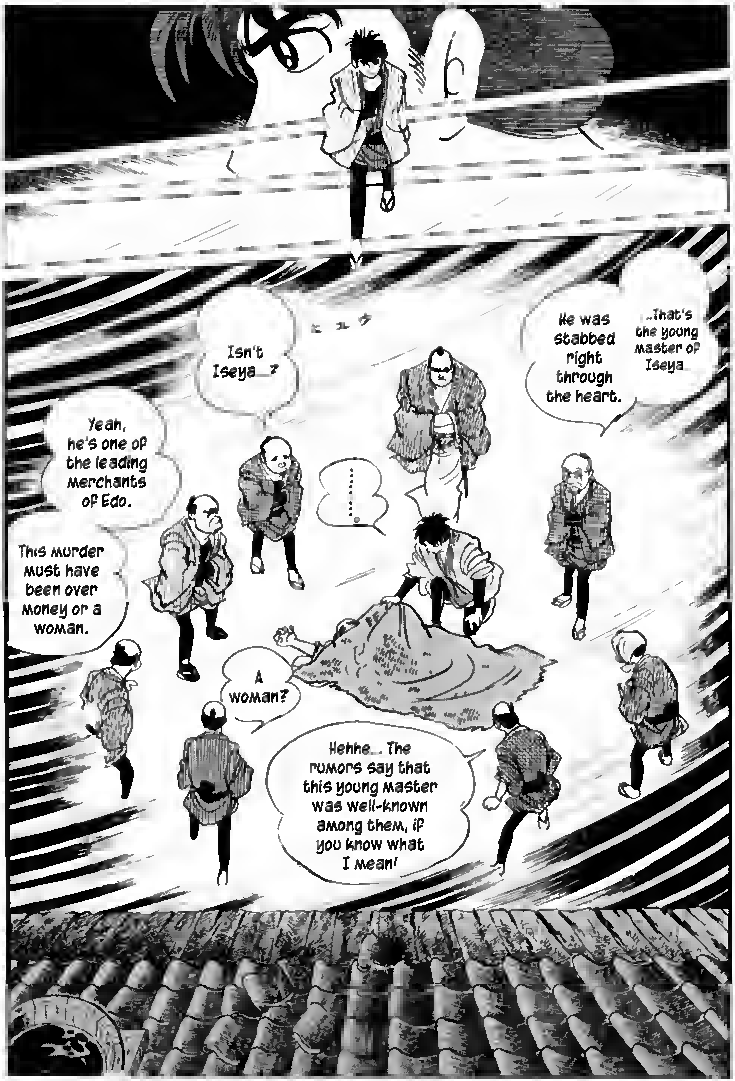
...Ahh, you
really... are
something..
Dear.

You are just fit..
to go out to work
in such garments
all the time...



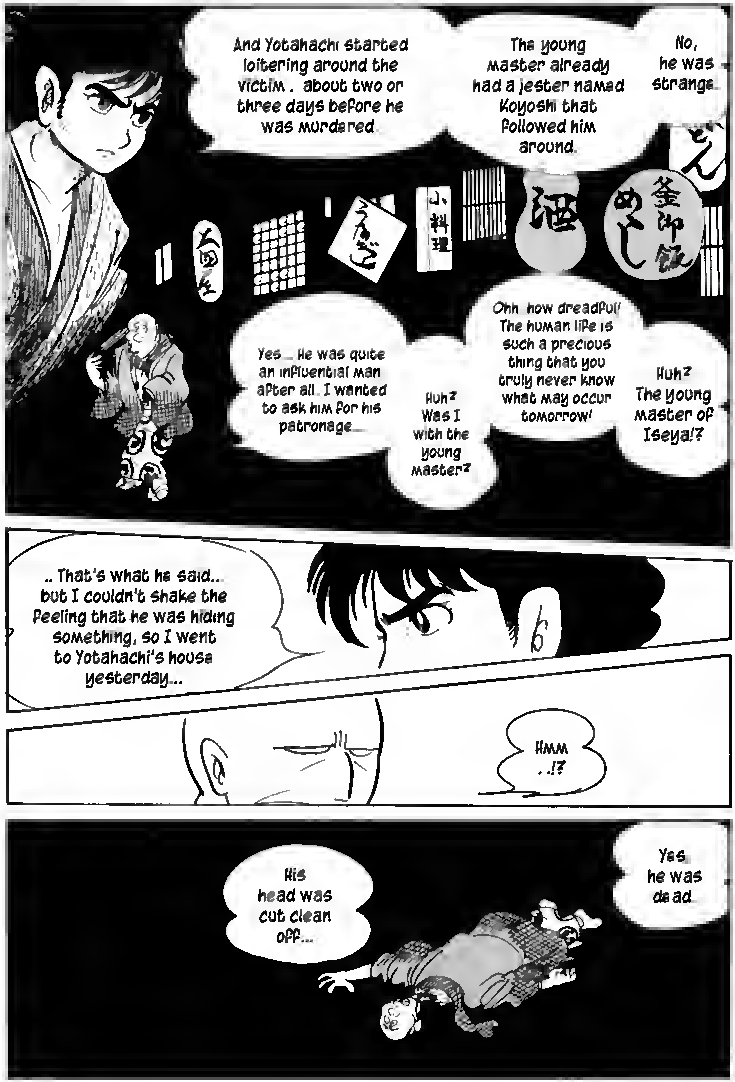

That was quite a half-hearted response.
Please, keep yourself together... Dear.
Starting early tomorrow morning, beginning with Sir Kurokawa...
You will be making your New Year's greetings.
...Yeah.
You finally have a shot at employment.
You must do your best this coming year.
I know...

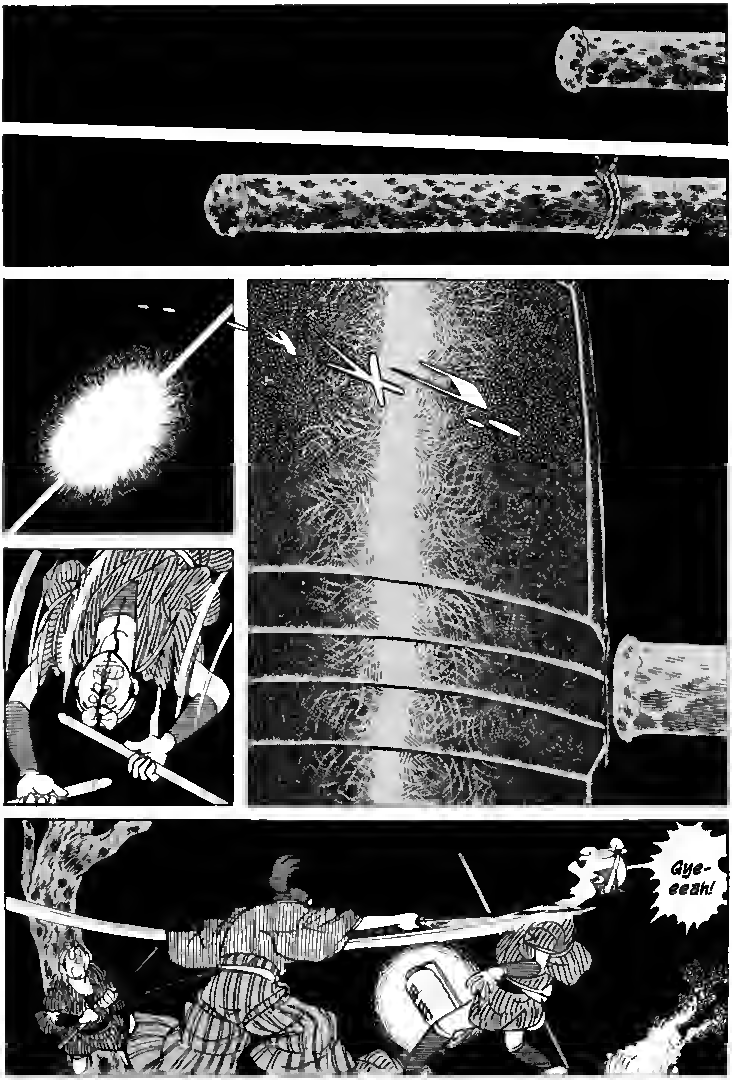


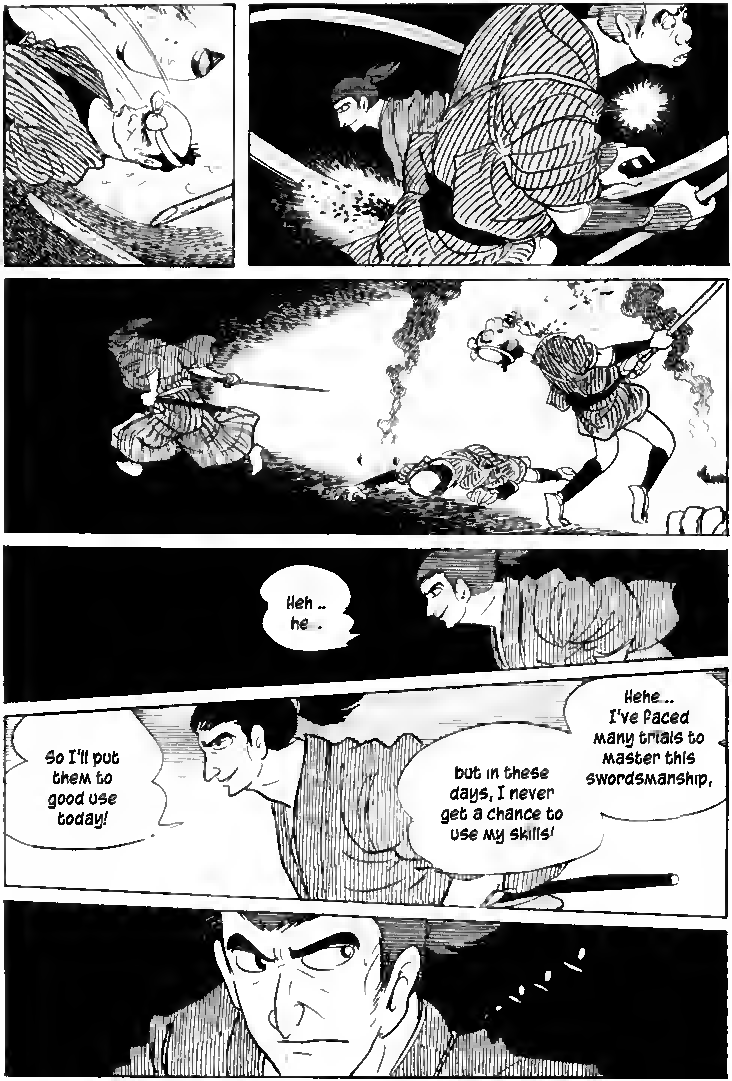

...That's the young master of Iseya...
He was stabbed right through the heart.
Isn't Iseya...?
Yeah, he's one of the leading merchants of Edo.
This murder must have been over money or a woman.
A woman?
Hehhe... The rumors say that this young master was well-known among them, if you know what I mean!

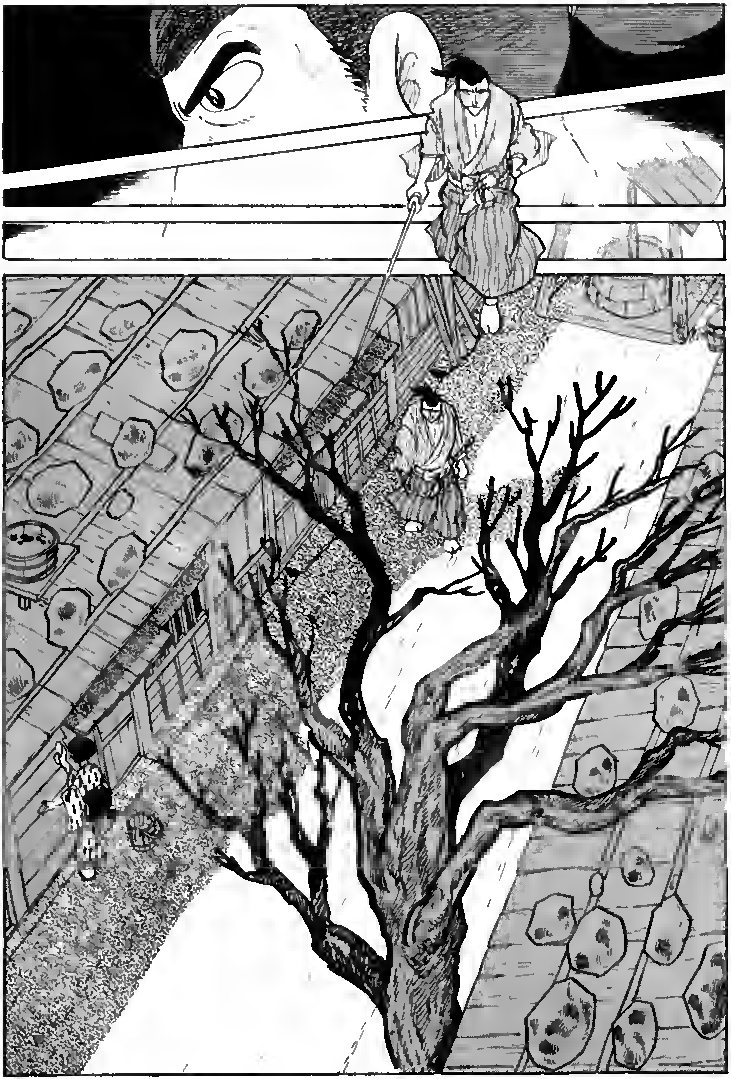
Tch, what could possibly be erotic about finding a murderer?
began questioning every single woman that the young master had whispered to
...So, I...
Sounds like an erotic investigation. I envy you. Hehe..
Hehe
...And?
Oh?
But after questioning all the women... none of them seemed to have the slightest resentment...
He was just the womanizer that the rumors make him out to be.
So many women came out, like a row of potatoes clinging to a vine.

He seemed to have clean breakups, just like a rich young master.. He used plenty of money while carousing
It's the money
So did you find a trail from those women...?
I see...
But they, too, were all hanging around the young master's waist trying to pick up the scraps from his table
So I had nothing else to do but start questioning his friends.
No, the trail stopped there
None of them bore a grudge out of gratitude?
But someone strange came from out of nowhere
None whatsoever. So I started to pret..
He was a jester named Yotahachi.
The young master loved carousing What's so strange about a jester?


And Yotahachi started loitering around the victim. about two or three days before he was murdered.
The young master already had a jester named Koyoshi that followed him around.
No, he was strange.
Yes... He was quite an influential man after all. I wanted to ask him for his patronage...
Huh? Was I with the young master?
Ohh how dreadful! The human life is such a precious thing that you truly never know what may occur tomorrow!
Huh? The young master of Iseya!?
.. That's what he said... but I couldn't shake the feeling that he was hiding something, so I went to Yotahachi's house yesterday...
HMM ..!?
His head was cut clean off...
Yes, he was dead.


Gye-
eeah!

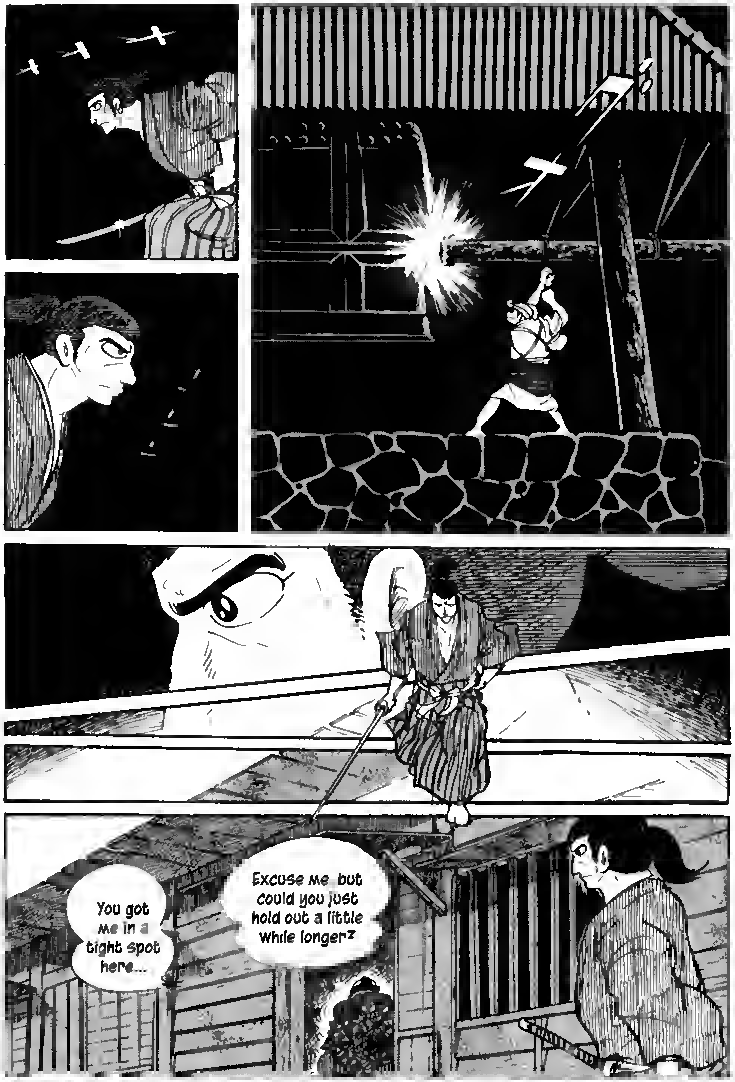

Heh.. he..
Hehe... I've Paced many trials to master this swordsmanship,
but in these days, I never get a chance to use my skills!
So I'll put them to good use today!



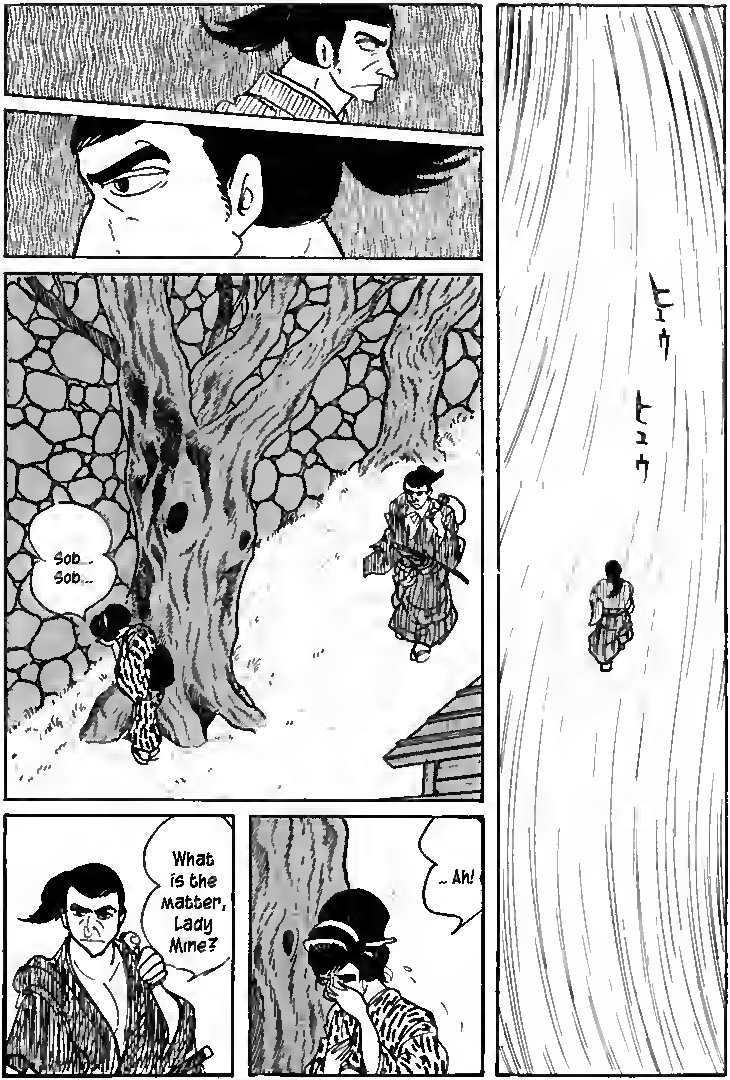
Pardon me for my late introduction.
..I am the wife of Tabuchi Samanosuke, who has just moved here.. My name is Mine.
No... it's Pine.
As do I. Now you must excuse me..
I hope to be at your service from now on.
My deepest apologies..
Look at where we are. You don't need to argue over such things.

……
What a lovely wife...
And...
You dead-beat!!
Get lost!!
You goddamn sloth!!
What do you mean, what!?
Ahh! W-What was that for, you bitch!?

Ohhh, well if it isn't Sir Aogai...
Hohhoh hohho ..
You make me do all the work .. and drink nothing but liquor every day...!!
Eeeek!
I certainly do have quite a hopeless husband...
Hoho ho
Come on, get in! What are you waiting for!?
...And it's been a while since I've heard a samurai's speech...
...You lousy good-for-nothing!!
...Yes, she's good.


You got me in a tight spot here...
Excuse me, but could you just hold out a little while longer?

Yes, but...
You keep saying, just a while longer... But you've been keeping me for three months!!
But what can I do? I'll give you one more day.
I shan't be waiting a second longer!!
There is still no work... so we cannot move on as we had planned...
I have a business to keep here, you know
Tch. That's got nothing to do with this..
Hmph. I gave him a loan without collateral because he's a samurai, and now this
Guess even samurai these days


ヒュウ ヒュウ
Sob... Sob...
~Ah!
What is the matter, Lady Mine?

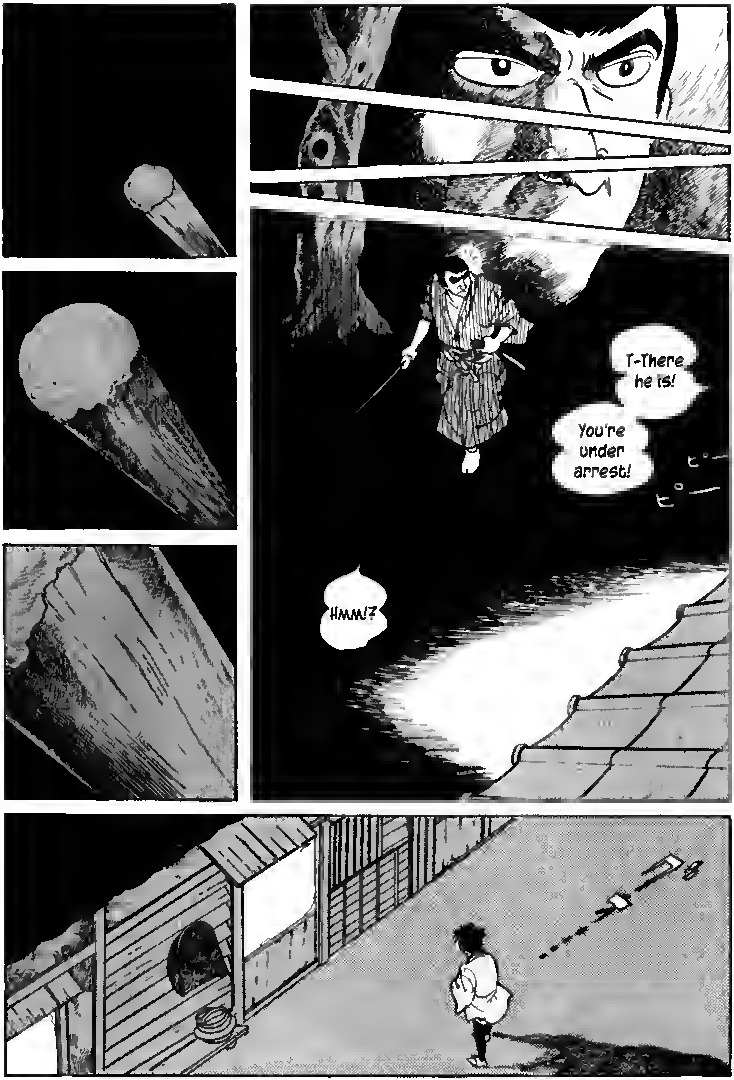
If you have any troubles, you may tell me.
...I am a ronin, as you are.
I'm sorry you had to see me so immodest ..
Huh? Oh, nothing ..
I-I thank you.
And I've been living as a ronin long enough to make a good enough living.
.....
Hehehe... No... it is just the ease of singlehood.
You spend each day to the fullest.
...You are a great man.

...Samano-suke is a very soft-hearted man.
He is always being used .. and always ends up getting involved in his colleagues' crimes...
!!
...This is a harsh lifestyle.
Even the townsfolk mock us.
...My apologies, but .. I want you to use this
N-No, I cannot!!
Huh?

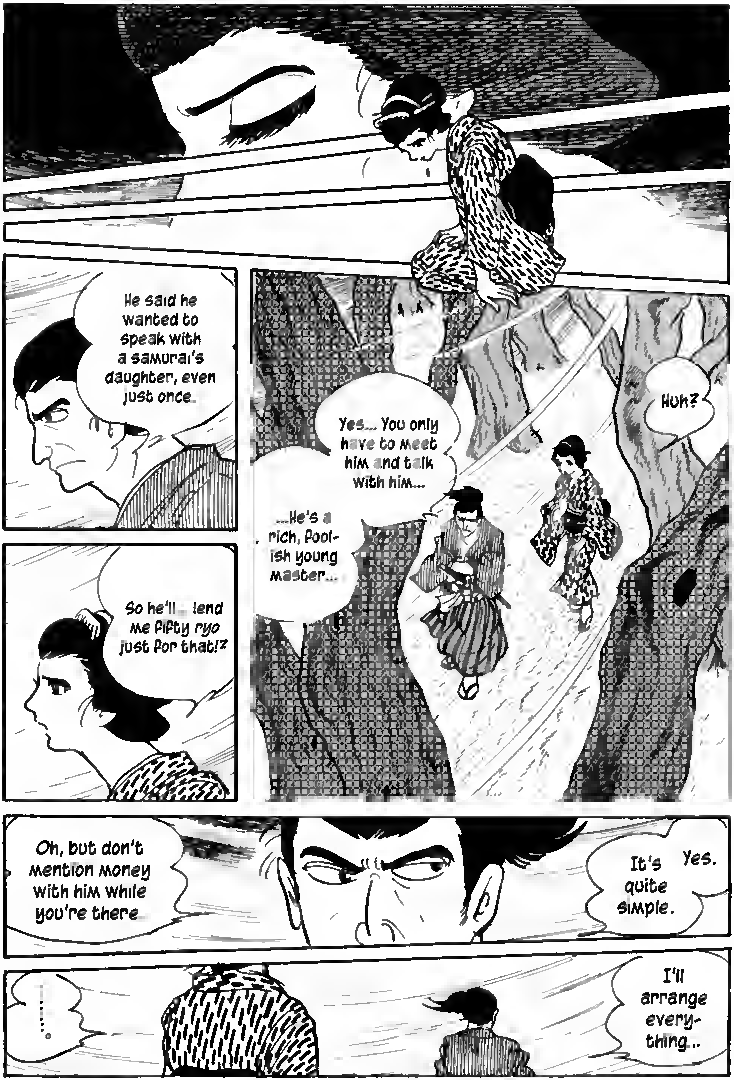
If I keep it any longer, it will only be spent on liquor...
I can-not... Sir Aogai.
No, think nothing of it. It's only money I got from gambling and bodyguarding rich hooligans
T-Then use it... in whatever way suits you best...
..Sir Aogai.

Laugh that I, a samurai's daughter... hold such indecent feelings!!
Do laugh at me, Sir Aogai
...I am in need of money.
But... But I want to let Samanosuke be employed once more.. no matter the cost
If I just have fifty ryo..
that .. that will be enough
Eheh...
They seem spirited And who are they?

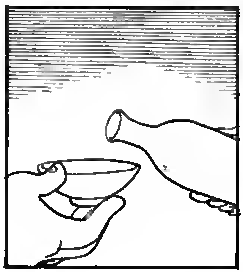
He's a derelict who buys off women... From town girls to streetwalkers and courtesans, and fools around with them.
Ehhehe... He's a philanderer... Not to mention a gourmet.
That's the young master of Iseya, Master Aogai.
Oh? A samurai's!?
Hehhe... And actually... I just heard this from one o' his friends...
The young master... said that a samurai's daughter is all that's left, that he'd pay anything to sleep with a samurai's daughter
Hehhe.. Talk about a conceited bastard..
..Yotahachi...
Yes?


T-There he is!
You're under arrest!
HMM!?

Sob... Sob...
Huh? What's the matter, Mine?
Why are you crying?
...I have brought much trouble upon you.
But I...
When I think... that all our troubles are finally over...
Sob... I am just so happy...
hate to do this to you... but I don't think I need to be hired badly enough to give money to Sir Kurokawa...
.....

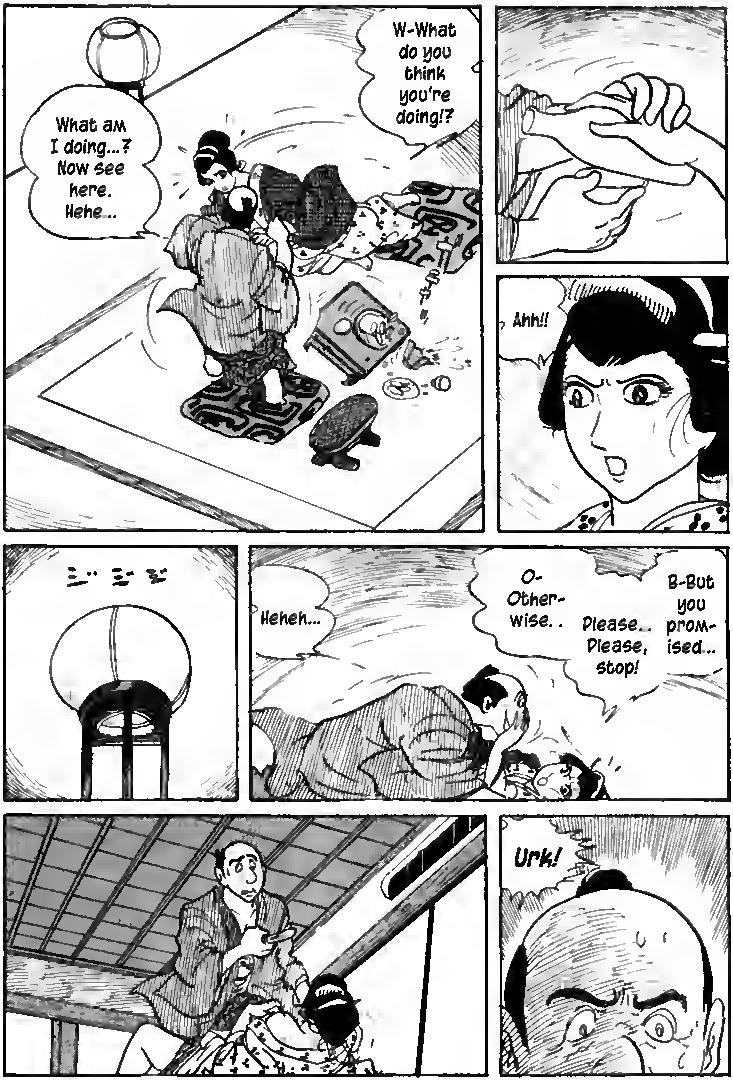

He said he wanted to speak with a samurai's daughter, even just once.
Huh?
Yes... You only have to meet him and talk with him...
...He's a rich, foolish young master...
So he'll... lend me fifty ryo just for that!?
Oh, but don't mention money with him while you're there.
Yes. It's quite simple.
I'll arrange everything...

...Sir Aogai sure is late.
Eh... hehe he..
Well of course. He must be trying to be tactful.

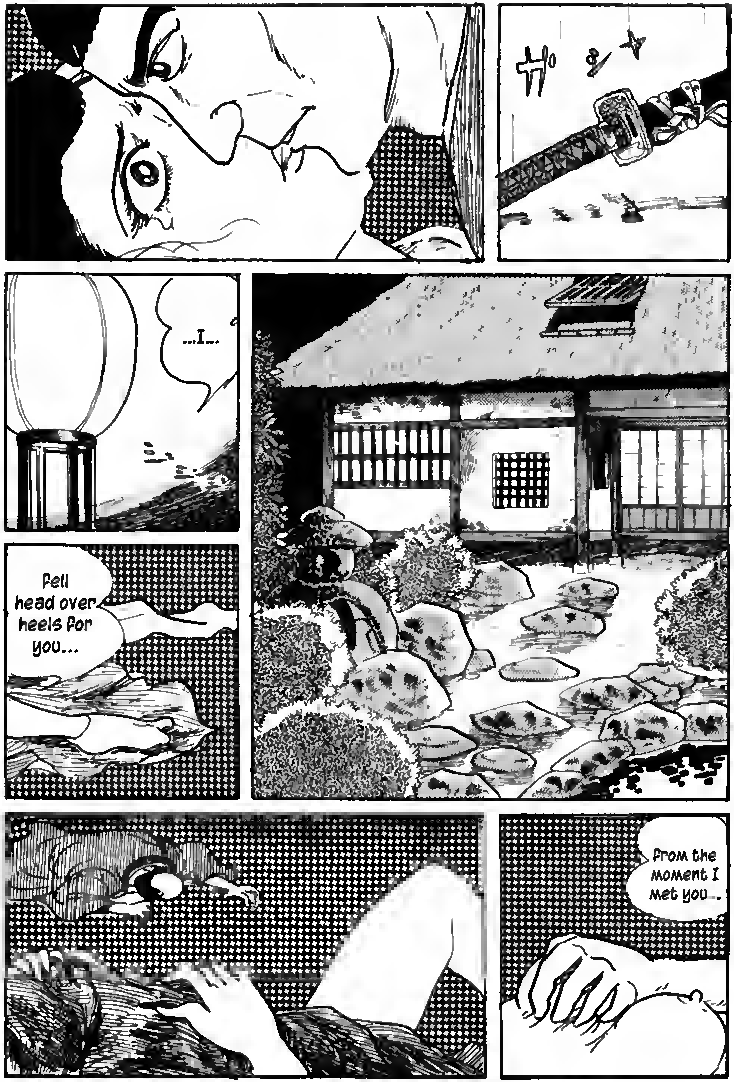


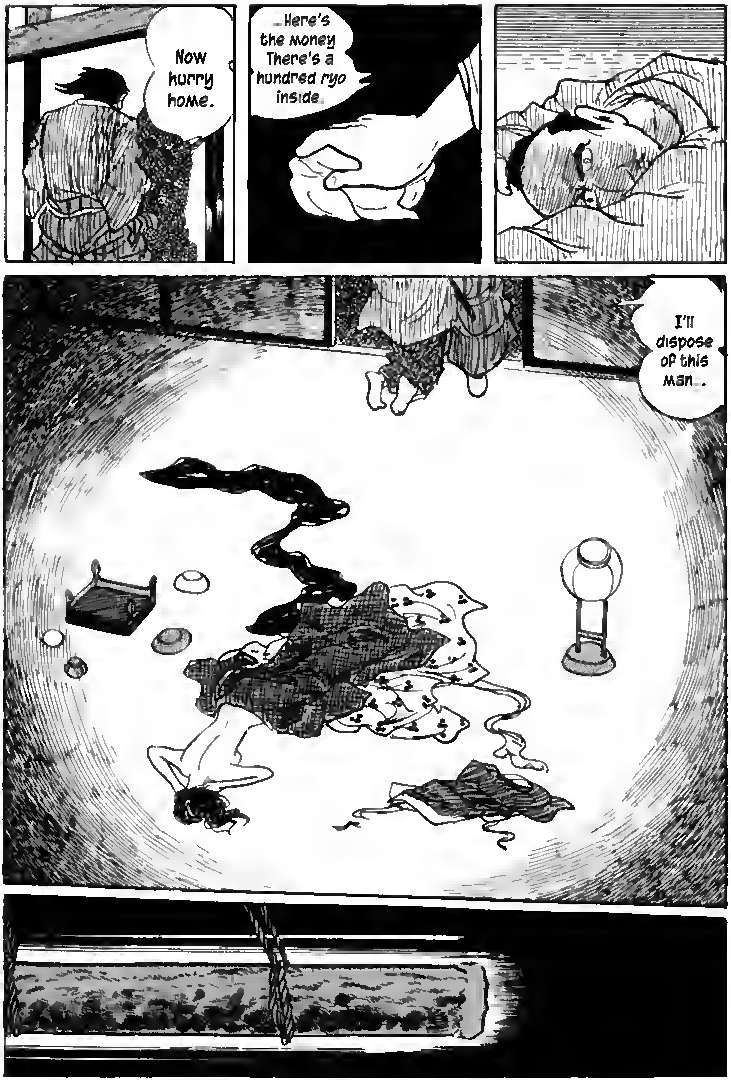
Y.. yes.

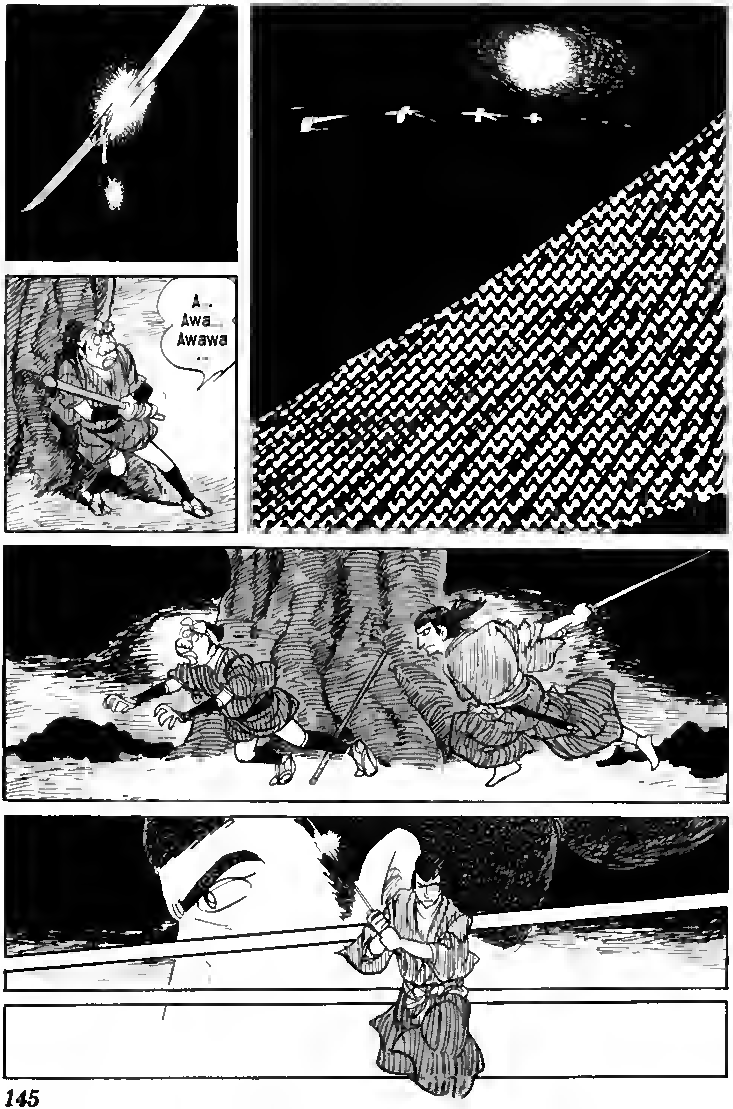
Ehehe.. May I ask you to pour me a drink?

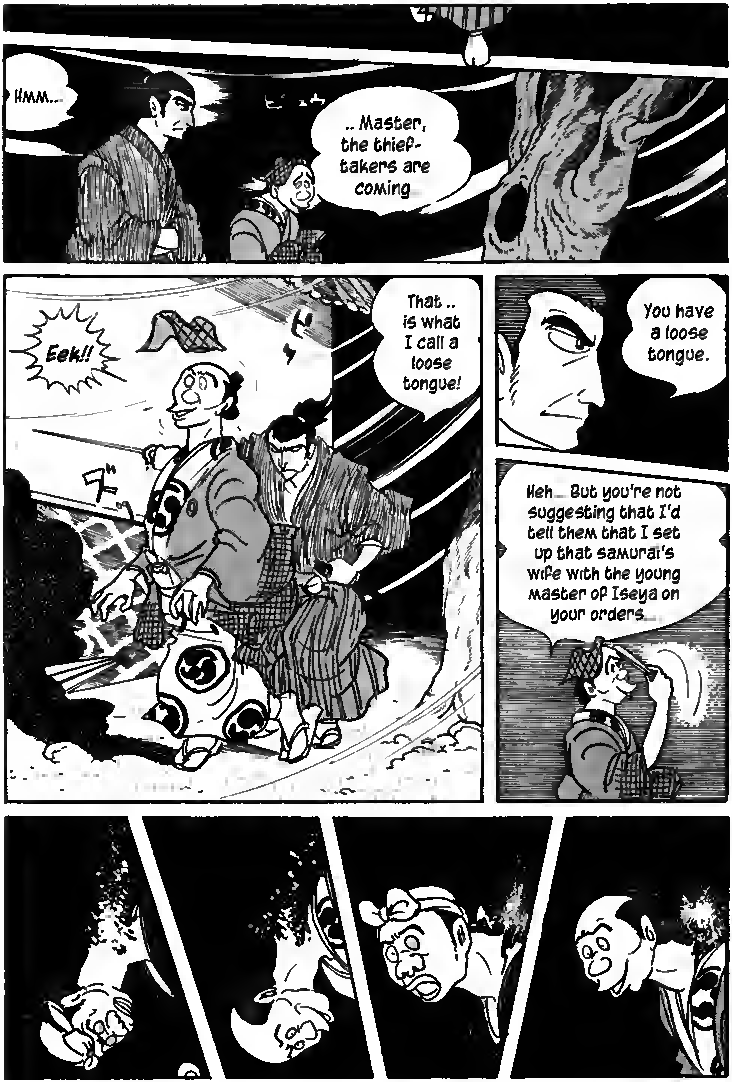

What am I doing...? Now see here. Hehe...
W-What do you think you're doing!?
Ahh!!
Hehen...
O-Otherwise..
Please... Please, stop!
B-But you promised...
Urk!

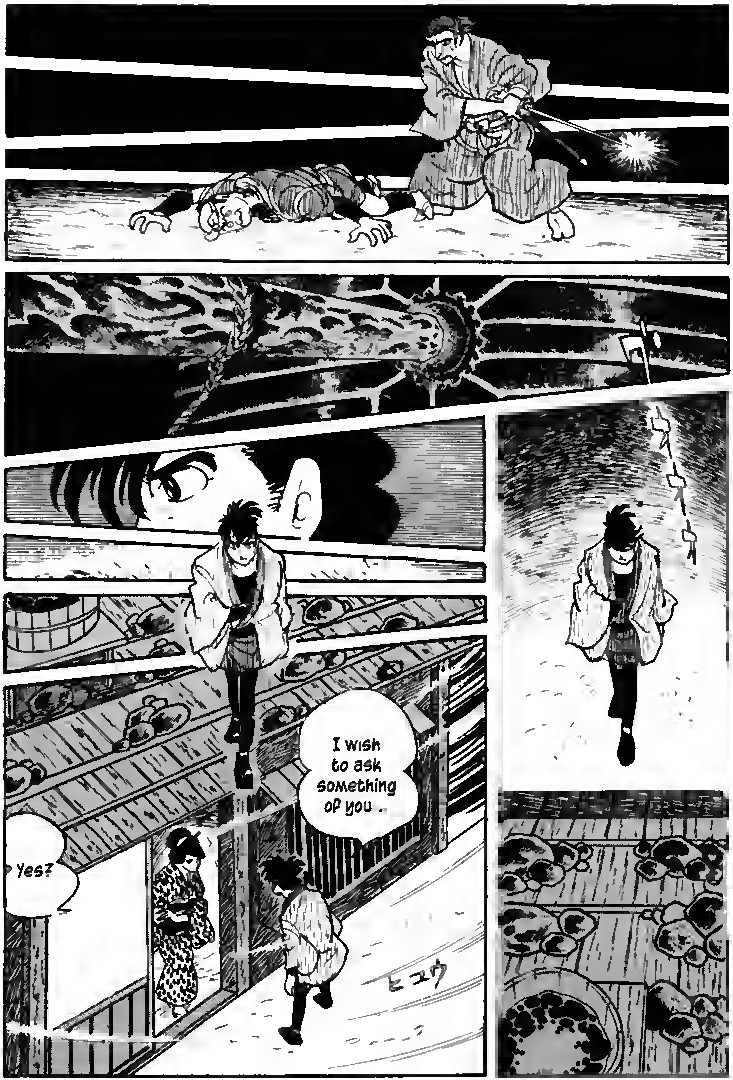
MUCH ...!!
T-This is... just too...
Ahhh ...!!
Sorry I was late...
Hmm?
Ah, what... What should I do!?
I-I've killed him...
S..Sir Aogai...!!


...I...
Fell head over heels for you...
From the moment I met you...

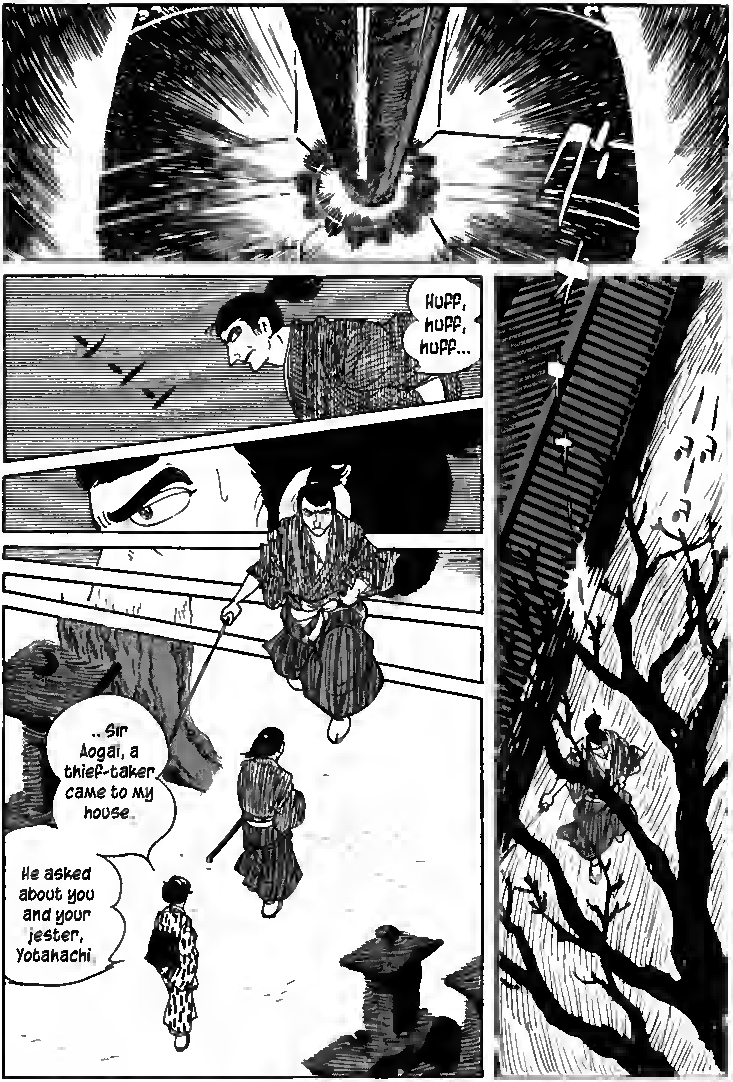

Now hurry home.
...Here's the money. There's a hundred *ryo* inside.
I'll dispose of this man...


A..
Awa...
Awawa
...


Hmm...
.. Master, the thief-takers are coming
Eek!!
That .. is what I call a loose tongue!
You have a loose tongue.
Heh... But you're not suggesting that I'd tell them that I set up that samurai's wife with the young master of Iseya on your orders...


I wish to ask something of you..
Yes?
ヒュウ

I want to know about Sir Aogai's jester, Yotahachi..
Oh, uh.. Nothing yet...
Yota-hachi!?
W...What about Sir Aogai..?
I'd like to talk to you...
about the ronin next door...
Do you...?
N-No... I don't know anything.


HUFF, HUFF, HUFF...
.. Sir Aogai, a thief-taker came to my house.
He asked about you and your jester, Yotsukachi.

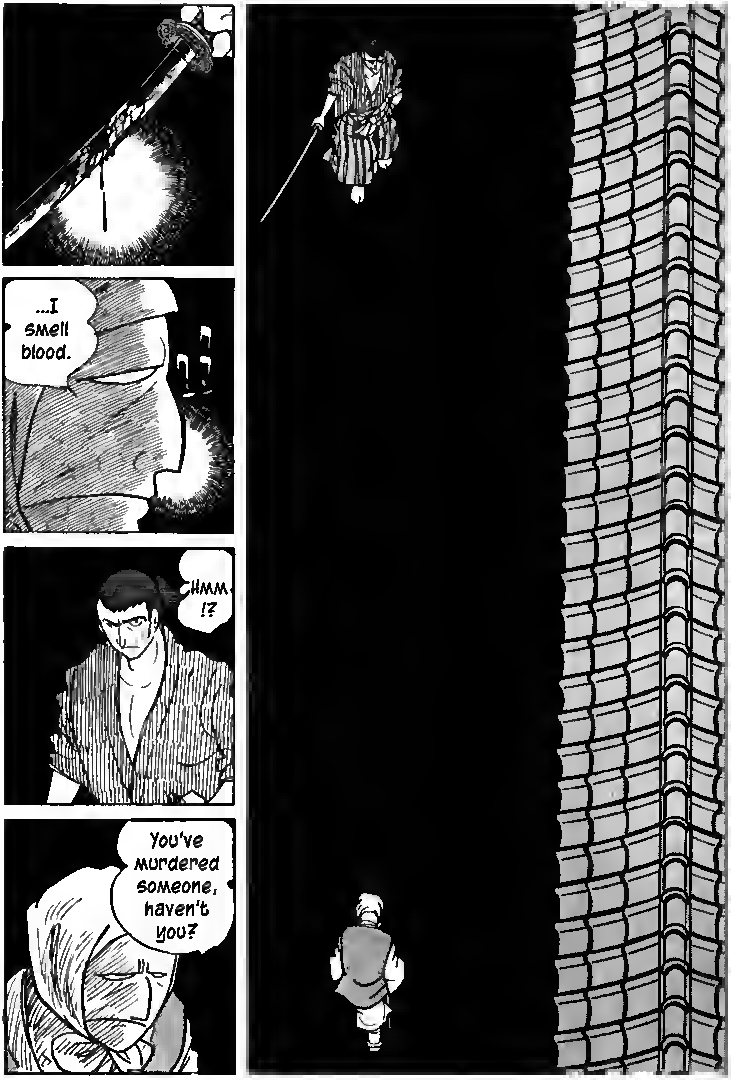
It was I who killed the young master of Iseya and Yotahachi.
Hehe... Don't you worry, Lady Mine.
S-Sir Aogai, if that... What am I supposed to...!?
They're quicker than I thought.
Hmm, they've come this far.
So... You can rest assured.
You can even deliver that message to the guard-house
...That'll be the story.
Huh?
Hehehe
Heh hehe. It's not like anything amusing will happen if I live any longer in this world.
Sir Aogai!
Take care of your husband
He's a good husband
ヒュウウ

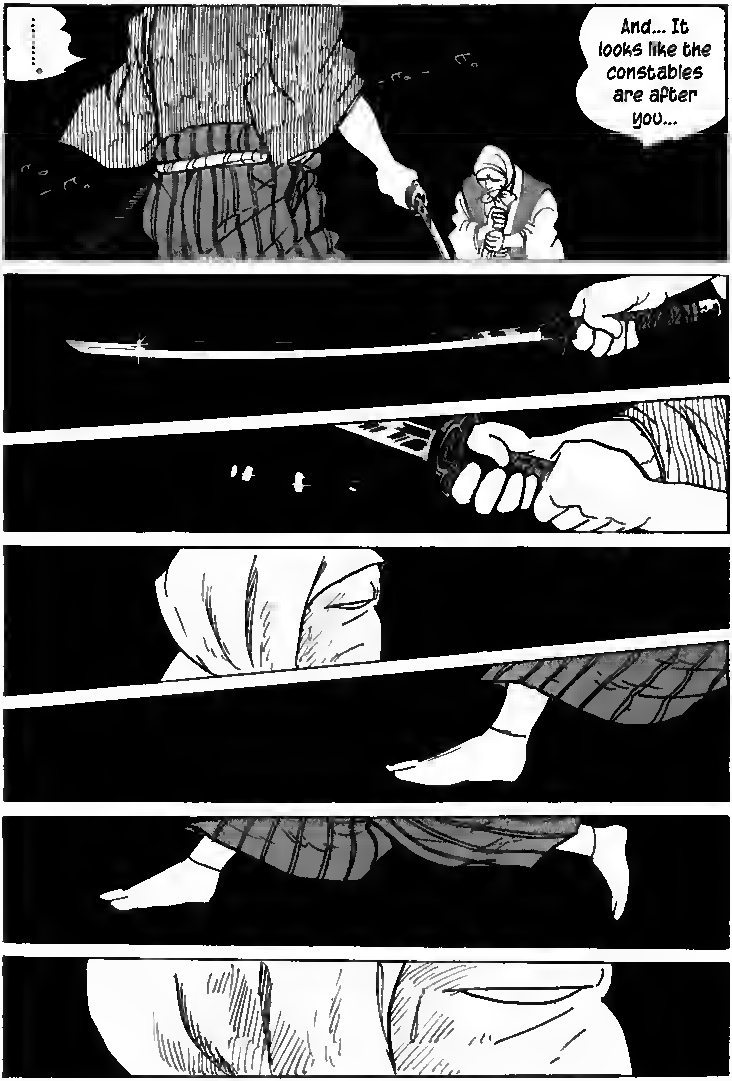
...Sniff... I'll bet the new year will come...
before I make it to the tenement house...
...Now, it's just about time to head home.
...Sabu...
What are you doing now?

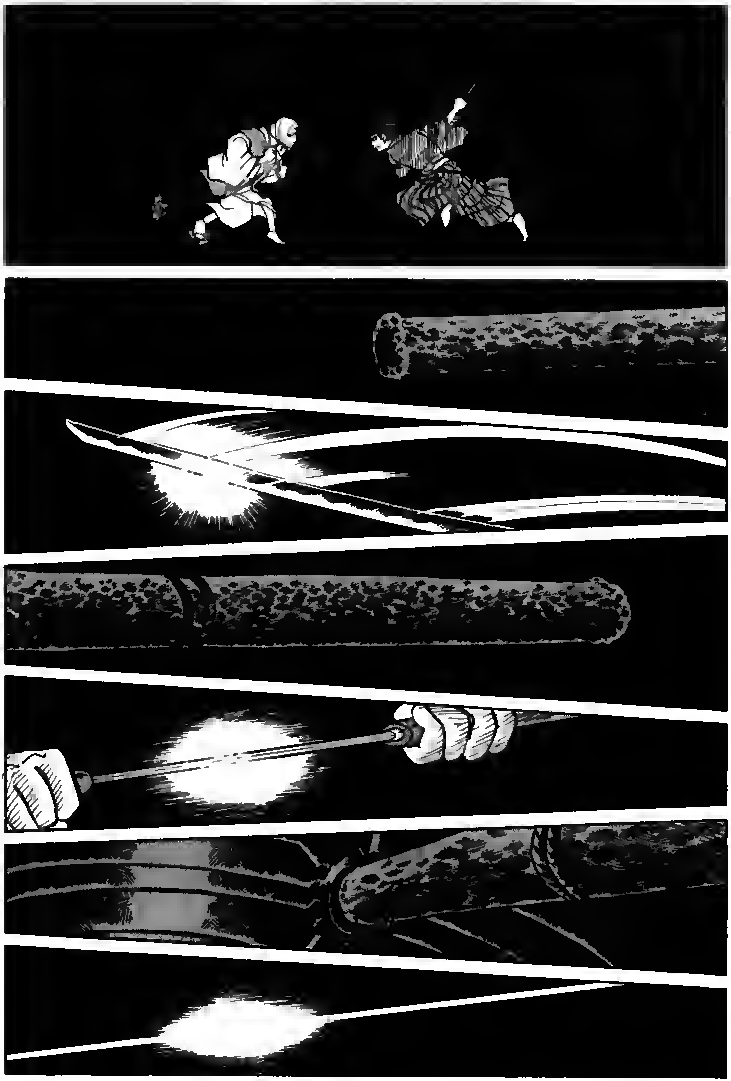
But... That just doesn't sit right with me.
We've received a message at the guardhouse.
Aogai, a ronin of Koshu, murdered the young master of Iseya for money, and also murdered Yotahachi the jester, who he used to get close to him... is what it says.
Oh? And why's that?
It's true that the ronin Aogai came up when I questioned Yotahachi.
But as I was chasing the ronin, the wife of his neighbor, another ronin named Tabuchi, showed herself.

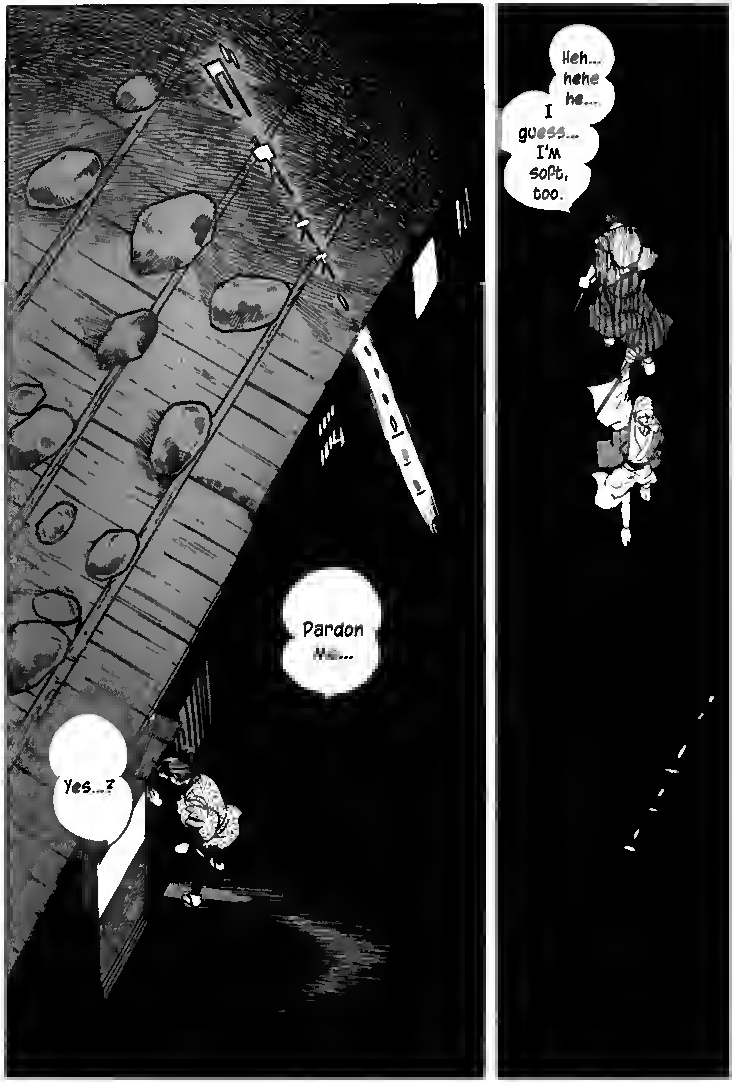
On top of that... that wife enjoyed the two or three chances she got to meet with Aogai in secret.
And.. when I went to question her about Aogai, the way she reacted was unusual.
The bill collector was shocked at how much better their financial standing was
So I investigated further... and discovered that the loan that had edded up for a while was paid off in the last two or three days.
I get it!!
I see what connects... the young master of Iseya, Yotahachi, the wife, and Aogai the ronin!
Alright, Ichi, I'm heading over to their tenement house...
You should just warm your decrepit body by the brazier at home
Tonight's New Year's Eve, and it's probably going to be cold
Don't worry, don't worry
Want me to come with you, Sabu?

Of course he'll be fine... but I just want to avoid the bill collectors...
Kch, what's he talking about...?
Hehehe... Looks like little by little, Sabu's becoming a full-fledged thief-taker...


...I smell blood.
HMM. !?
You've murdered someone, haven't you?


.....
And... It looks like the constables are after you...




Heh... hehe he... I guess... I'm soft, too.
Pardon Me...
Yes...?

年の関

January 1969 "End of the Year" (FIN)

佐武と市捕物控
SABU & ICHI
CHAPTER 53
PRESENTED BY
HOKUTO NO GUN
AND
HAPPY SCANS
TRANSLATED BY
SYSTEMATICCHAOS
CLEANED BY
WRIGHT
TYPESETTING BY
KAZUHIKO
PROOFREADING BY
ANGELOFCHAOTIX
CREDITS PAGE
BY TROBMAN
WRITTEN BY
ISHINOMORI
SHŌTARŌ

Chapter 54: The Crimson Cord

女湯
くさの風呂

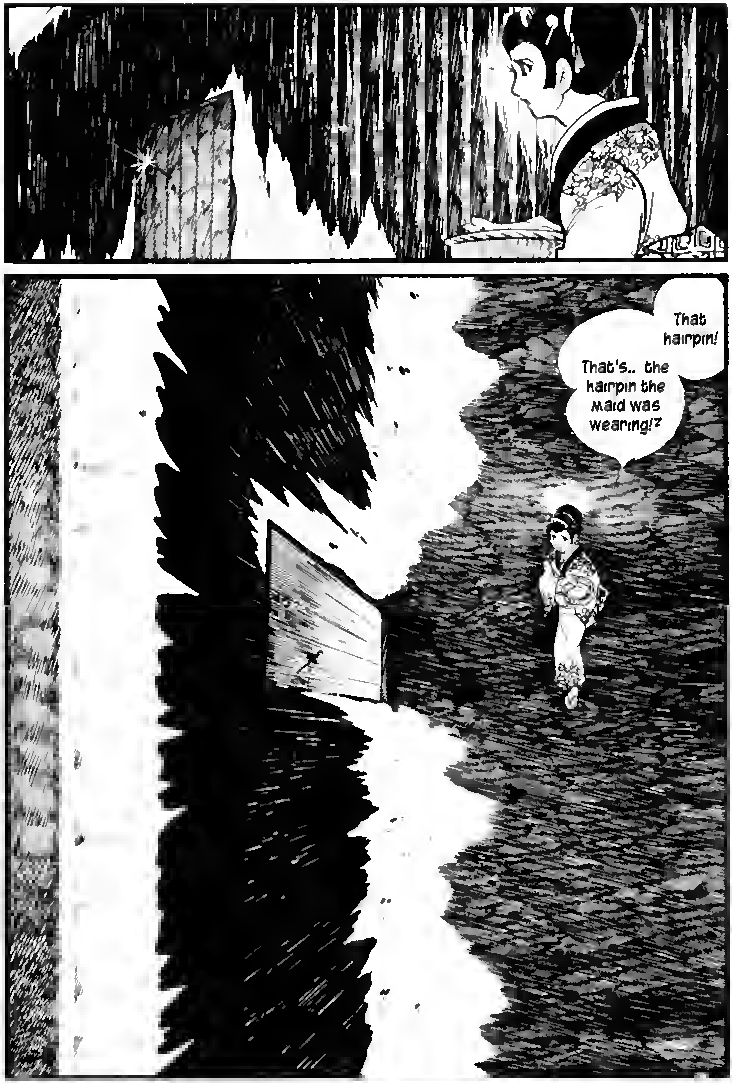
This is good,
But this isn't bad, either.
Oh?
All of these are carefully scrutinized products.
Why, yes of course
That's not for sale—
Oh, that's—
It's rather superb!
—My, this hairpin—

Oh, and why not?
It's on display with the rest of them, ain't it?
Y... Yes.
But that...
is a special order.
It's got a rather high price to it...
Yes Five ryo!
Oh, right...
Alright, how much!?
Sorry... but it is a special order..
..He he..
.. Whoa, whoa
カチャ
Huh!?
Hehe.. There she goes.
.....
Oh, but I think this would look much better on you, my lady..

Heh.
Oh, right.
Well, I'll be out for a while.
...Thank you for your patron-age...
Not even a spark.
She's almost spell-bound.
But I guess while a woman of her age is picking a hairpin alone...
Oh, wait. If I buy one one of these days

SIGN: KUSATSU BATHHOUSE, WOMEN'S BATH

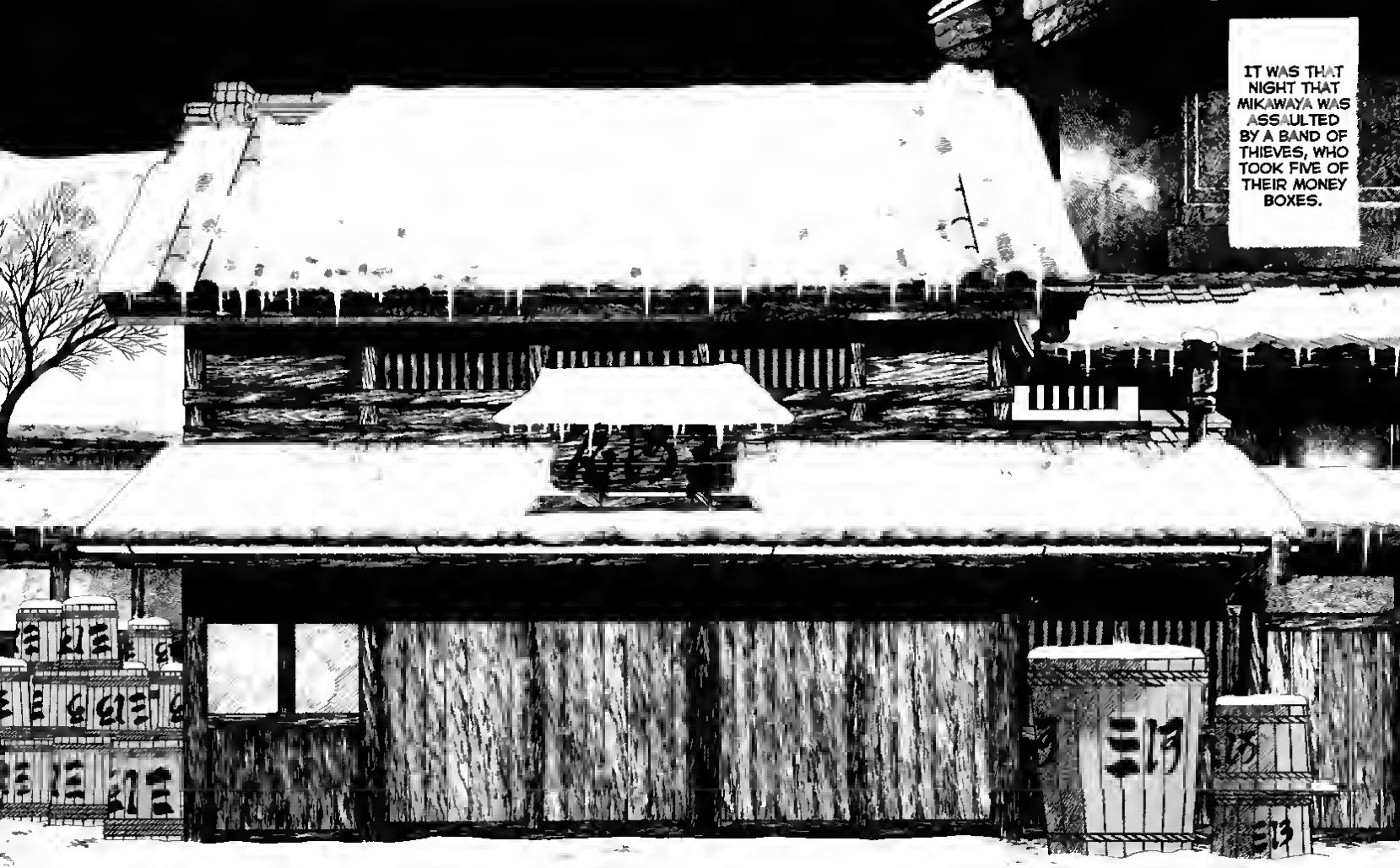
湯
Go on ahead
Sure is chilly these days
女
湯
...
..Ah!
Was she wearing that hair-pin!?
女
湯
男
湯


That hairpin!
That's.. the hairpin the maid was wearing!?

Don't you think it's odd, Gabu?
...And that's what happened
Not at all.
No, it is! I mean, that hairpin was worth five ryo!
...If you didn't buy it, there's no reason she couldn't.

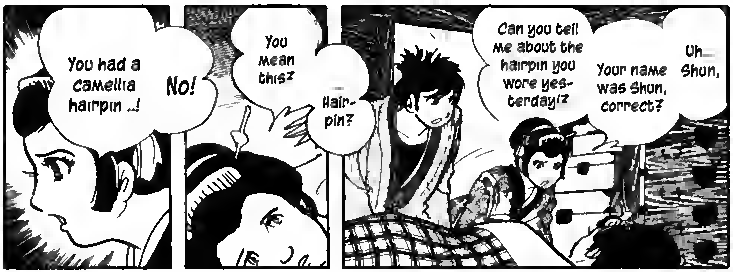
She just moved here not a month ago!
But..
But that woman... was a maid... who worked for Mikawaya!
She wouldn't have that kind of money!
And how do you know that she hadn't been saving up for it?
Hmpf, alright then.
Then maybe her master bought it as a gift...!
No, it can't be.
If it was, why did she leave the hairpin there...!?
...But that's not completely out of the...
Oh, please.
Heh... His wife is notorious for having a short temper.
He laid his hand on her... and bought it to shut her up.
Just what are you trying to say?
Heh, you just won't shut up, will you?
Doesn't that smell suspicious!?
She left a five-ryo hairpin on a fence!!

Her master gave it to her to keep her quiet and when his wife caught wind of it, she was lost into a sea of rage, grabbed it from the maid, and on an impulse she stabbed it into the fence...!
Hehe...
So why don't I tell you what happened?
Is something burning?
It certainly does!
I'm serious!!
And if it does, no one would pursue you no matter how many hairpins you have! Hehe!
They say that late nights ruin your skin.
You'd better get to bed instead of entertaining these stupid thoughts.
Hehheh hehheh... Well, good night.


IT WAS THAT NIGHT THAT MIKAWAYA WAS ASSAULTED BY A BAND OF THIEVES, WHO TOOK FIVE OF THEIR MONEY BOXES.

Huhz
See, I told you!
Enough about the damn hairpin!
Okay iz
Look that hairpin! It must've been some sort of a signal
SIGN. MIKAWAYA
Wait
I'm going with you
Hey!

I-It couldn't be... that woman..!?
Yes, one of our maids has been cut.
Was someone hurt...?
!
...Sounds like a disaster. You must've been terrified.
...So, you didn't happen to catch a glimpse of the thieves' faces, did you?
It was dark, and they came so suddenly...
No.
.....

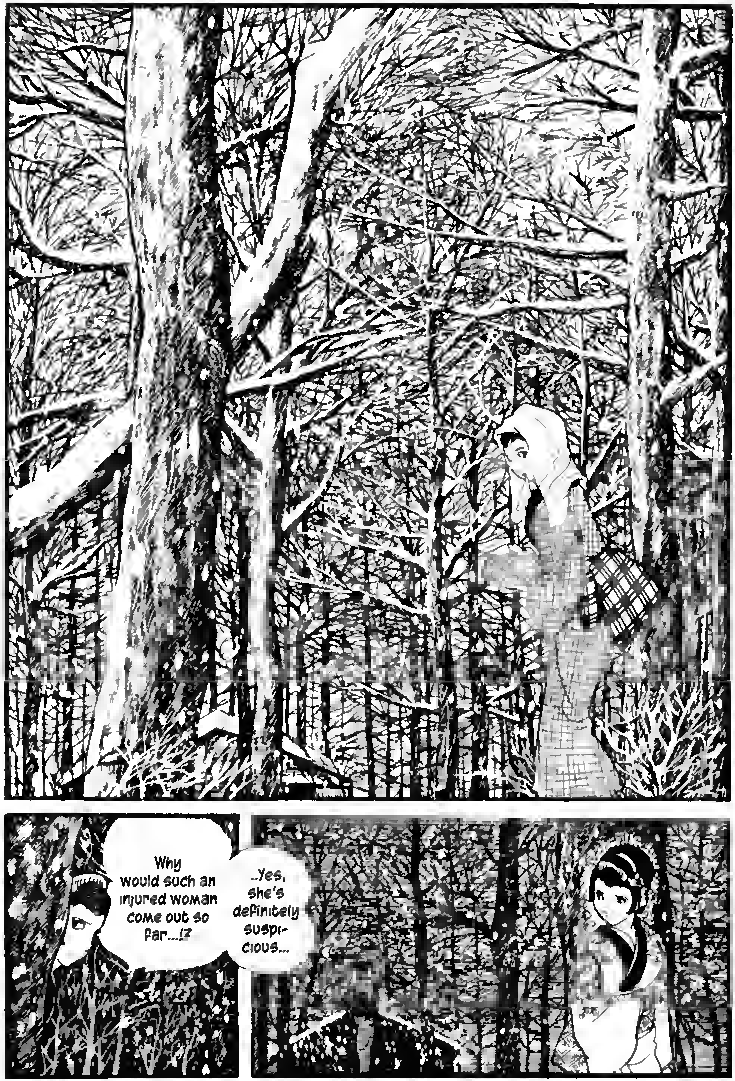

You had a camellia hairpin..!
No!
You mean this?
Hair-pin?
Can you tell me about the hairpin you wore yesterday!?
Your name was Shun, correct?
Uh... Shun,

Midori!
I clearly remember you wore it when I saw you at the bathhouse yesterday...
No way!
I'm afraid this is the only one I own
But...
Just keep resting, and you'll heal up.
Well, take care.
But even if she were...
I don't know whether or not she was lying...
Tch!
Don't you think it's suspicious how she fled like that!?
Come on!
That woman was injured, you know...!
What did you think you were doing, Midori!?
If she was with the thieves from last night, they wouldn't have...
And she had been wounded so gravely, they didn't know if she'd live or die!
What could a woman who had just barely come from the countryside do?

TEN DAYS HAVE PASSED SINCE THEN... AND THERE WERE STILL NO LEADS TO THE BAND THAT RAIDED MIKAWAYA.
Re-ally!?
Fine, fine, I get it
She could have intentionally injured herself to avoid suspicion!
I've still got things to do here...
So just go home
I'll hear you out when I get home..
.....
Eep!
...Fine, have it your way!!

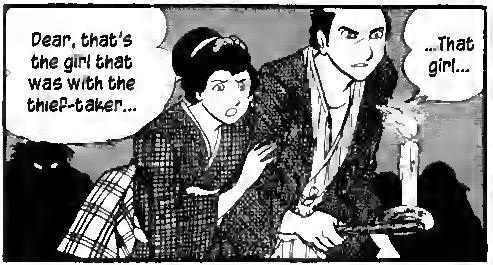
...Well, I must be off.
...Are you really going to be alright? You shouldn't push yourself...
I see. Well, I could go myself... but alright, be careful.
And I'm not going far...
No, I'm fine. I'll put on weight if all I do is lay in bed...
.....

Oh? Isn't that Boss Saheiji's...?
Good day
It's really pouring down today, isn't it?
Y... Yes.

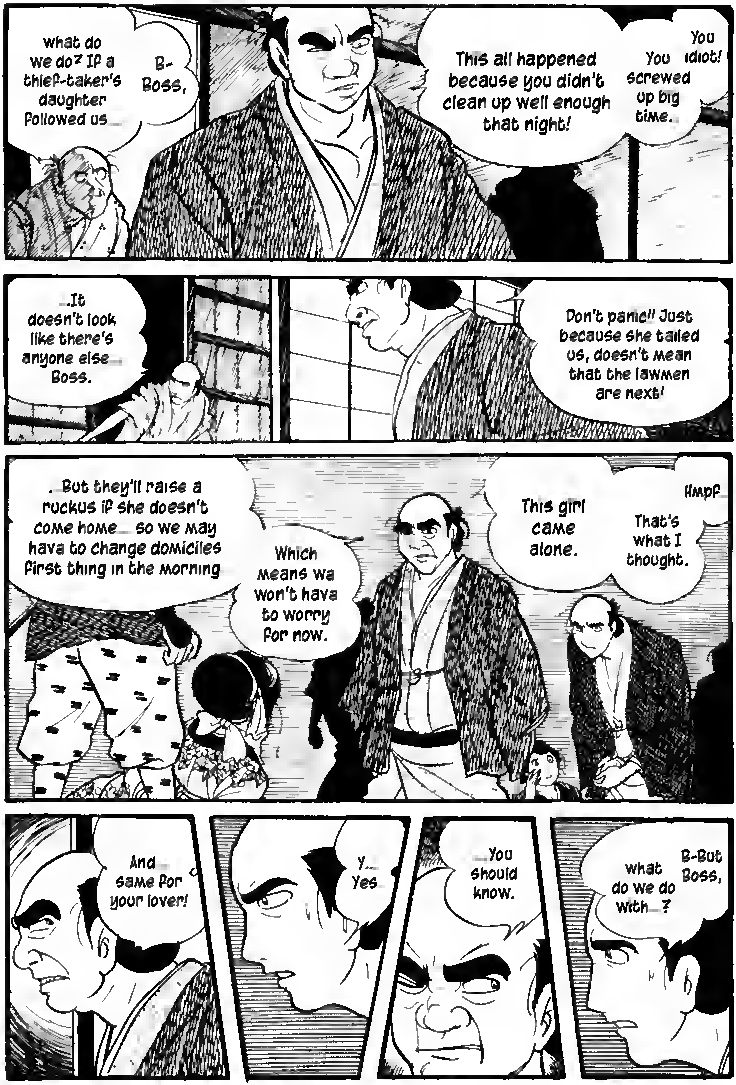

Why would such an injured woman come out so far...!?
..Yes, she's definitely suspicious...

Ahh!!
What do I do?
She's been followin' Shun!
That bitch!
.....

Uip!
Who is it!?


Dear, that's the girl that was with the thief-taker...
...That girl...

Y... You're the sundries store's... I knew it!
Hmm!?
..Oh!?
Eek!
A thief-taker's daughter?
W- What was that for!?
You dumb bitch!!
You let a thief-taker's daughter tail you!!
Y- Yes.
Sorry, Boss.

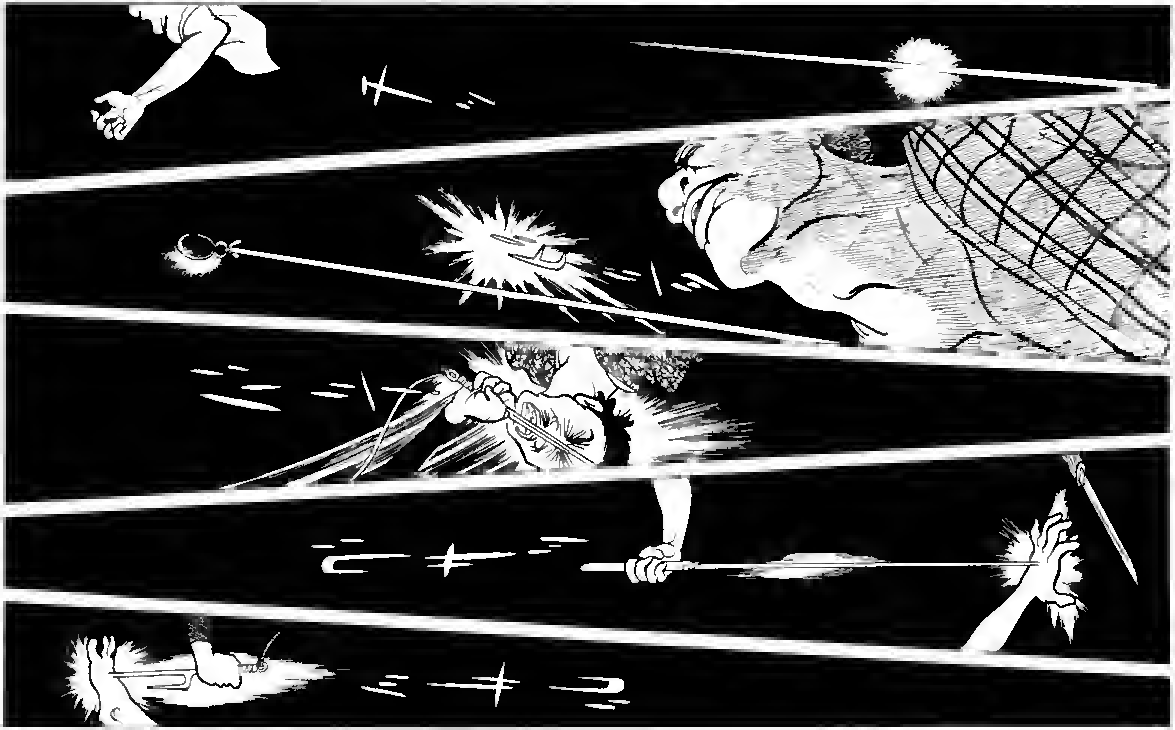

What do we do? If a thief-taker's daughter followed us...
B-Boss,
This all happened because you didn't clean up well enough that night!
You screwed up big time...
You idiot!
...It doesn't look like there's anyone else... Boss.
Don't panic!! Just because she tailed us, doesn't mean that the lawmen are next!
...But they'll raise a ruckus if she doesn't come home... so we may have to change domiciles first thing in the morning
Which means we won't have to worry for now.
This girl came alone.
That's what I thought.
Hmpf
And same for your lover!
Y... Yes
...You should know.
What do we do with...?
B-But Boss,

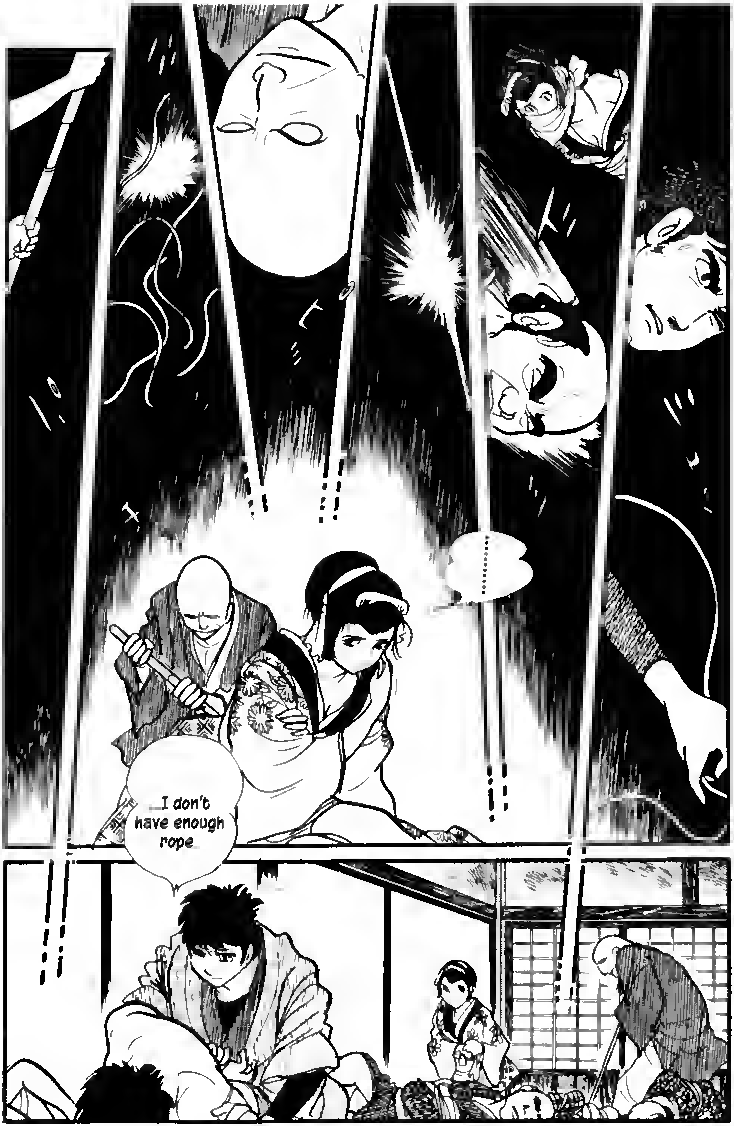
D-Dear !?
You idiot! You've long since fulfilled your purpose!
You really should've died then...!!
U...Urrgh!?
Dear!?

Tch, you think I'd marry a bitch such as yourself... z
t..that you'd marry me...!?
...You said if this... w...went well..
B...But dear, y-you mean that was all an act...!?
Eek!
You've brought me an entire lifetime of shame...!!
Intrusive bitch!

..Hmph
You're quite a fine woman
It'd be a waste to just do away with you—and it wouldn't sit right with me!
Urrgh!
Urk!
Waugh!!
Heh... he...

W-
Waa-augh!!
Woah!?
Gah!
Sons
of bitches!!




...I don't have enough rope

"...It's a good thing you met so many people you knew while you trailed them.

"The oil merchant's wife told me where you were going, and I got Ichi and chased after you...

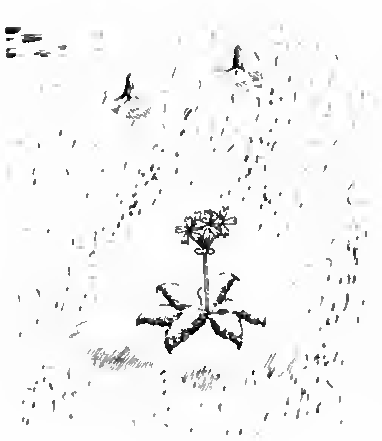
"But we couldn't catch up to you with the snow falling like it is.
"We had come to the edge of the thicket, and had lost our way... when we found your hairpin stuck in a tree.

"For goodness sake..."

紅い捕縄

But to think that the maid, Shun ..
They're all a band of thieves who have used those tricks to wreak havoc here and there.
The signal of the hairpin, the new maid... the sundries scouting...
Hah...
I know, I know.
Without a second thought, for the man they love!
A woman will do despicable things...
But up until the dying moments of her life, she let those men lead her by the nose...!
She was still just a young girl...
I completely understand why you run around in a daze trying to catch them.
But...
I think now you should know better, as a mere woman...
than to play detective...
I felt what it was like to tie up the murderer!
No, not at all!

January 1971: "The Crimson Cord" (FIN)



佐武と市捕物控
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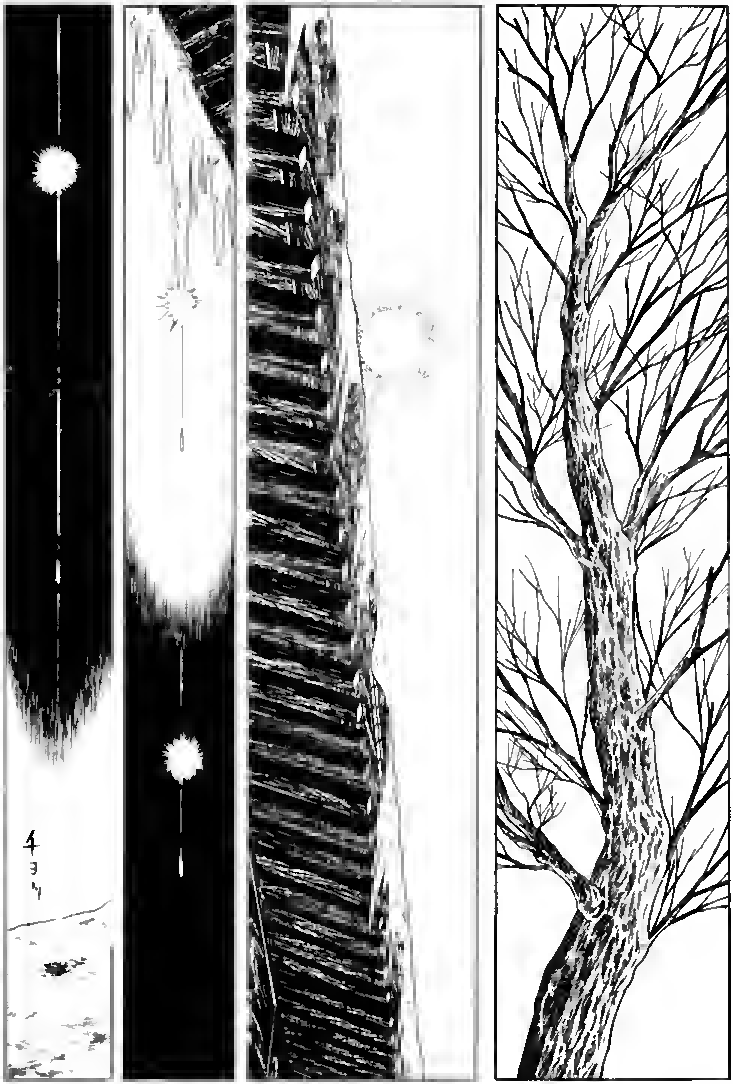
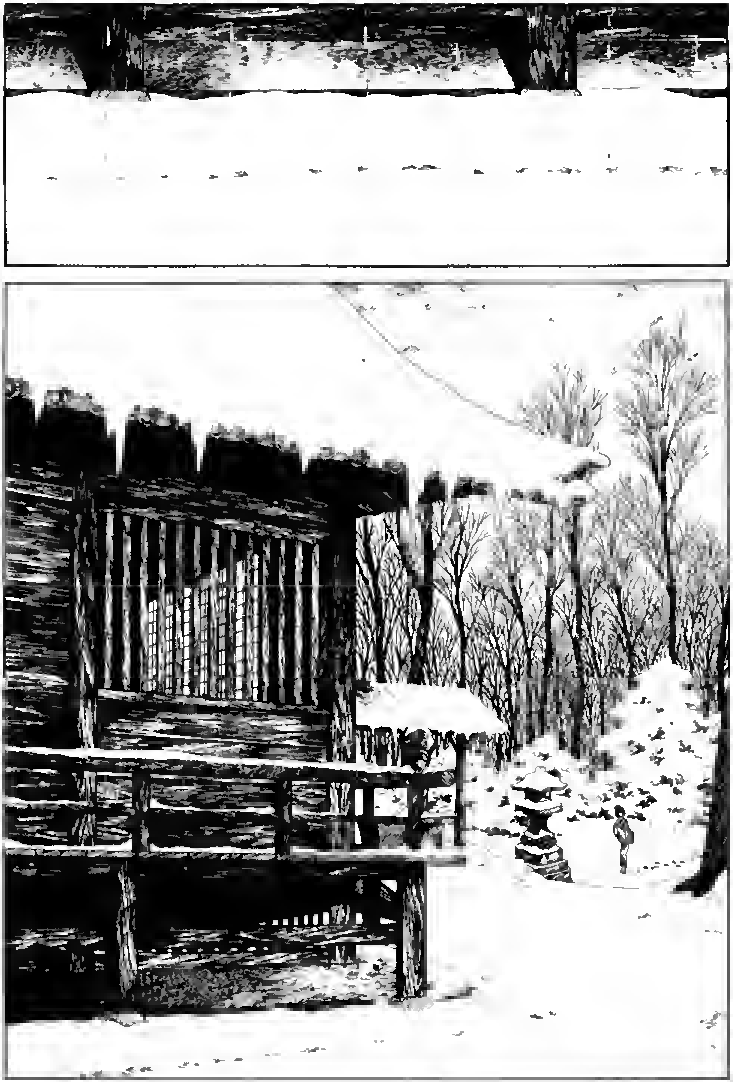
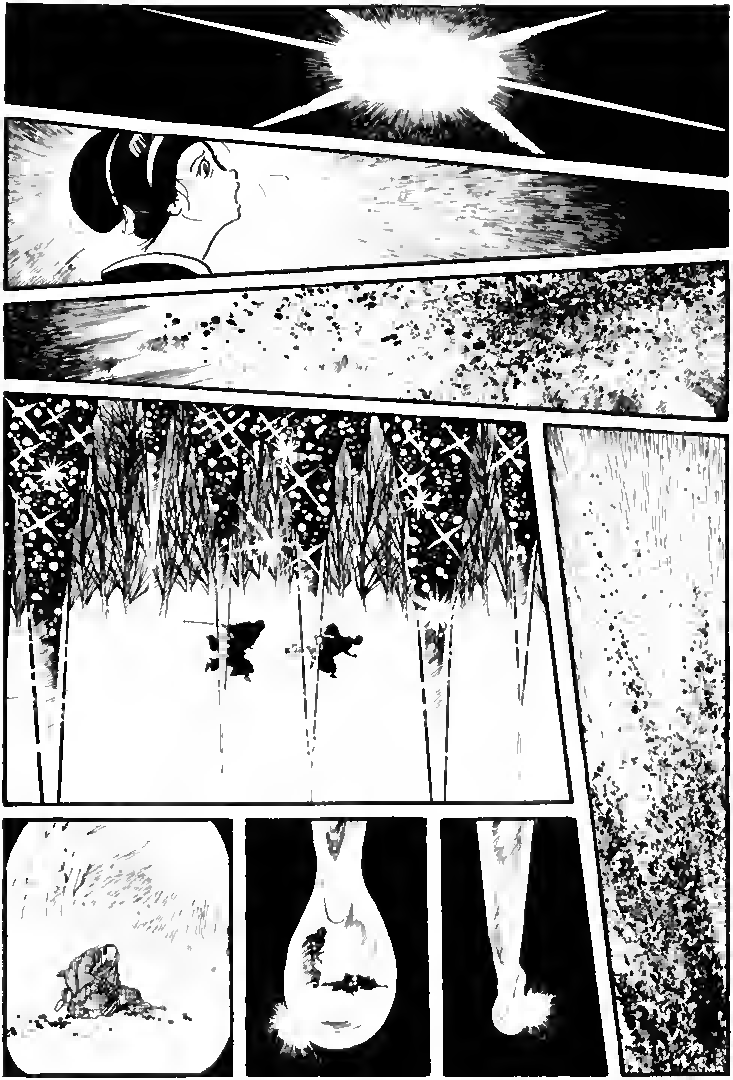
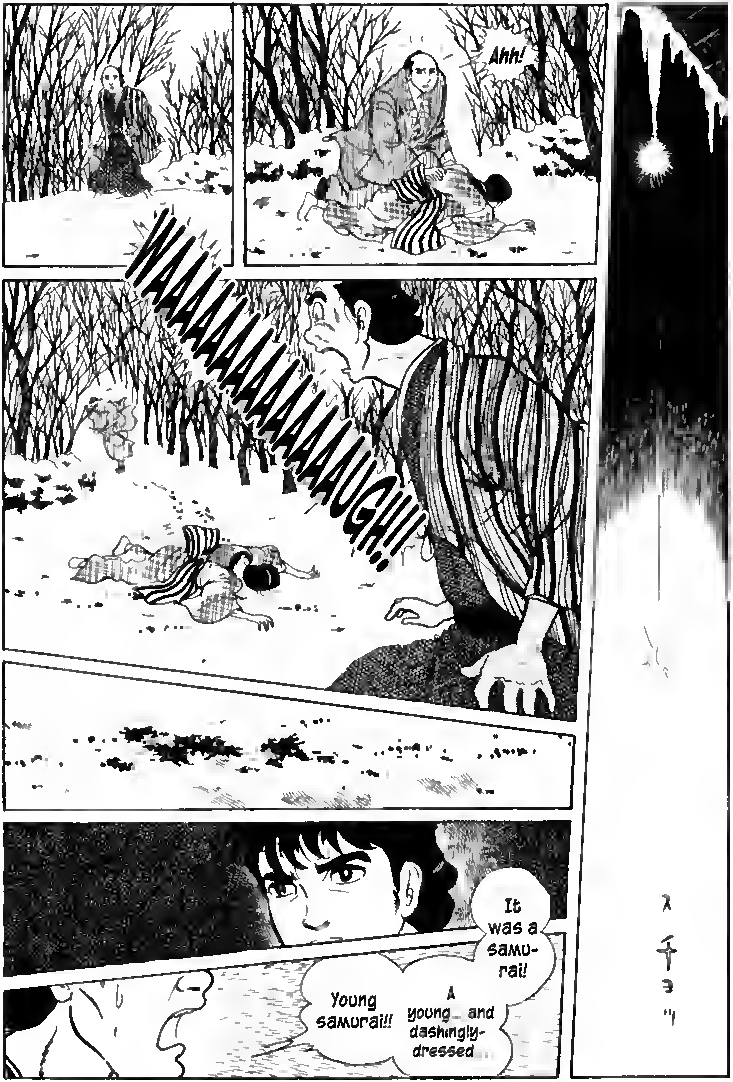
Chapter 55: The Black Primrose

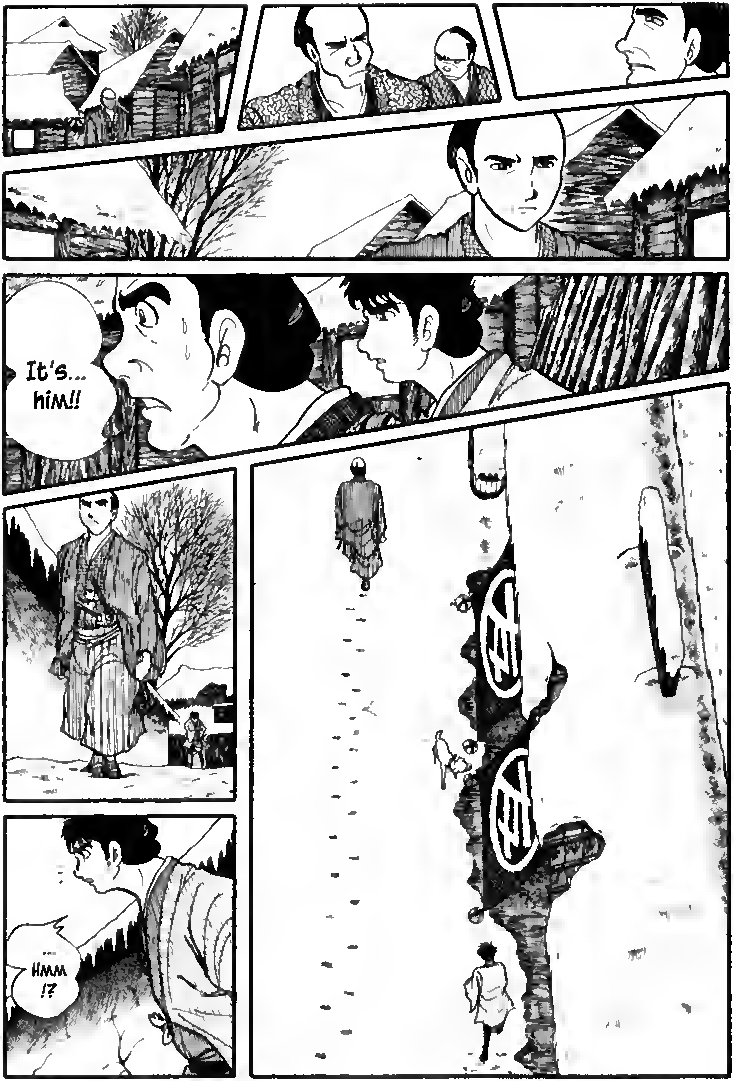




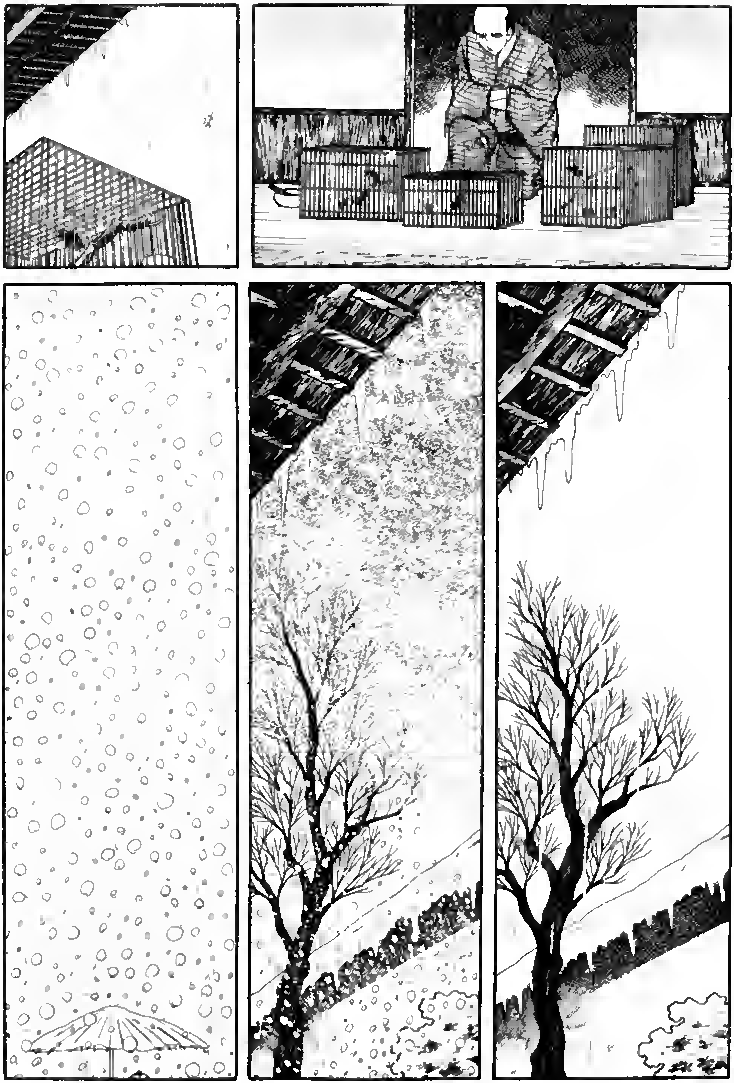



Ahh!
WAAAAAAAAAAAUGH!!!
It was a samurai!
A young and dashingly-dressed...
Young samurai!!

Would you be able to point out his face if you saw it?
W-Why... did he kill my Kiyono...!?
Dam-mit!
Dam-mit!!
I'll never
I'll never forget it!!
O-Of course I would !!

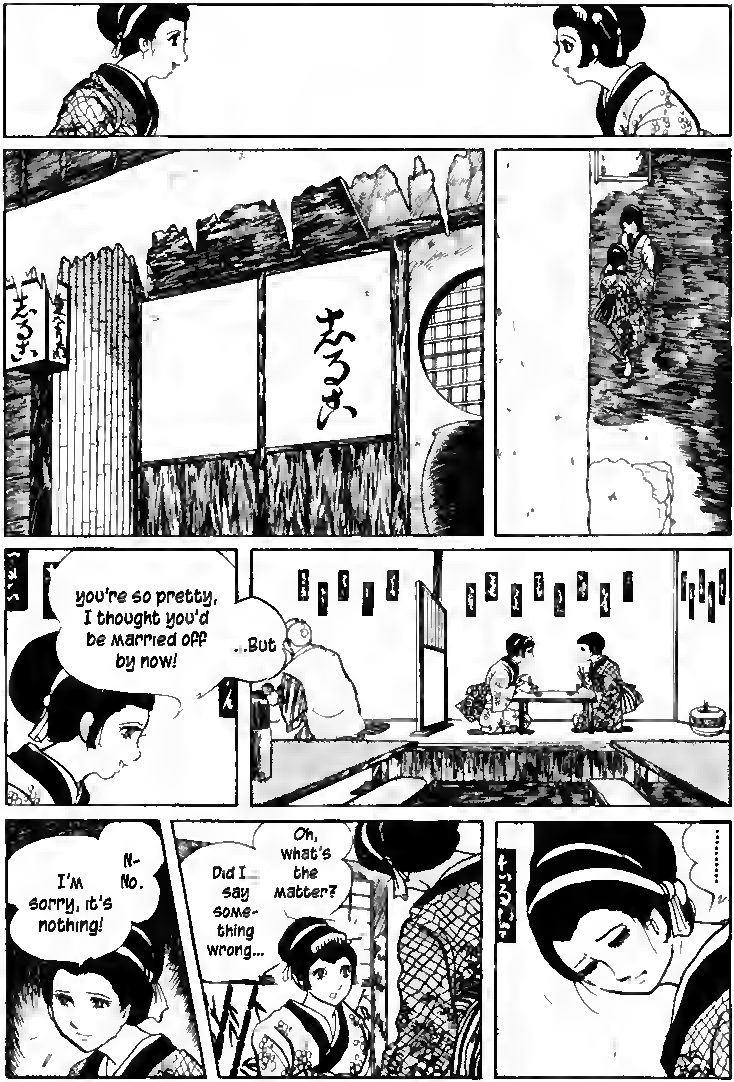

It's... him!!
...HMM !?

チュン
チュン
チュン
Did he recognize me!?
Why did he stop!?
And what are they doing!?
Spar-rows !?
チュン
チュン
What's going on ...!?
Were the sparrows gathering Reed ...!?
He passed by them ...!

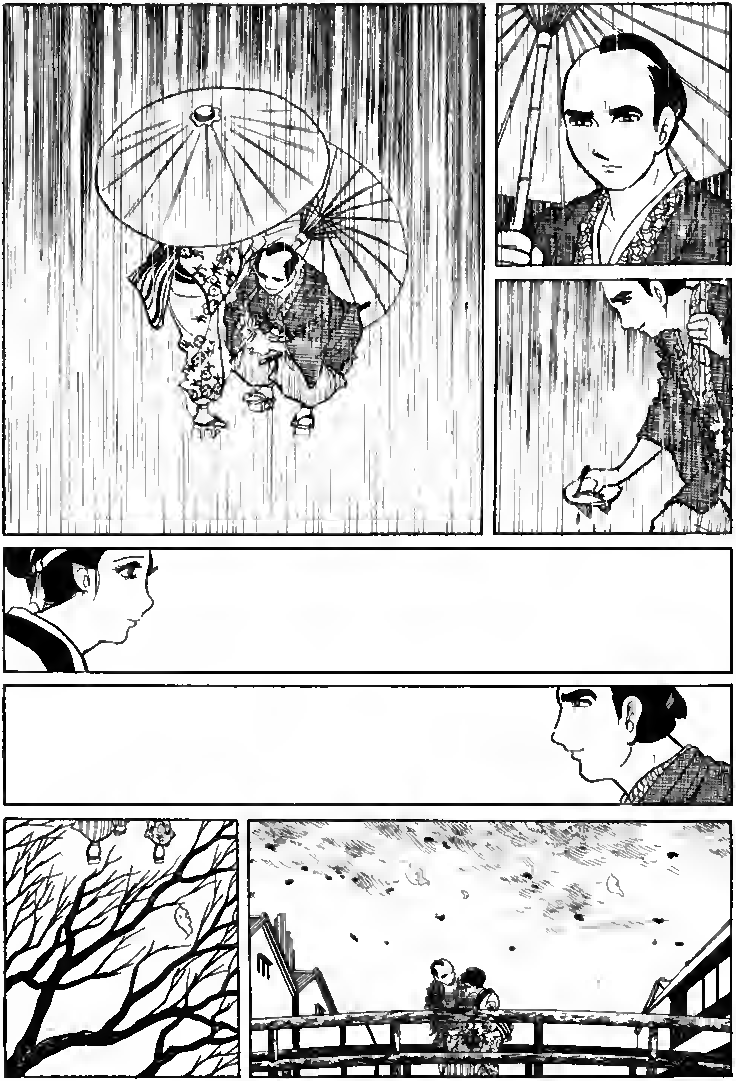


That day, my Father... shut me up in my room, and I couldn't sneak out...
...I'm so sorry that I broke my promise...

Oh!
I just... don't understand!
...The woman is Tomoye, the only daughter of Tohei, the charcoal merchant of Kuroyune district...
He's the second son of a respectable samurai clan.
...The man is Sakaki Kojiro.
I know her very well!
Tomoye, the charcoal merchant's daughter...


さろん
さろん
you're so pretty, I thought you'd be married off by now!
..But
N-No.
I'm sorry, it's nothing!
Did I say something wrong...
Oh, what's the matter?
.....

If something's... bothering you at all, why don't you bring it up to me?
Right!
I may not be of much help to you...
...but...
... Right!?
"...I first met him... early in last year's autumn... on a rainy day..."

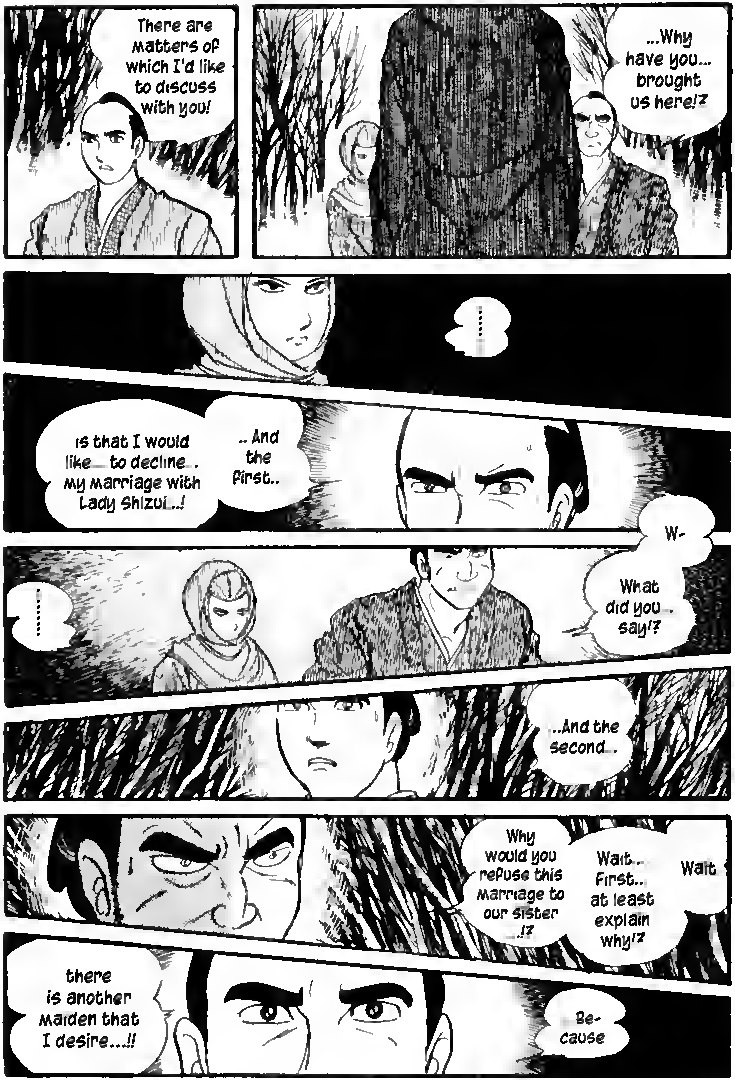


...But my father...
...stated quite strongly that nothing good could come of loving a samurai...
.....
...And of course, his parents..
were opposed as well...!
But...
But we truly love each other from the bottom of our hearts!
We're truly in love!!

What's wrong, Tomoye ...!?
Y-You're not..!?
.....
Tomoye?
U...
Urgh!
...Tomo-ye!
...Ggh...
Tomo-ye..
is pregnant with Kojiro's child.
And after looking into it... I found that Kojiro also has a fiancée that his parents selected for him!
What a bastard!
And one more... The woman he murdered
But .. Midori insisted that her feminine intuition says he's not the murderer
I just think that's because she's sympathizing with Tomoye...

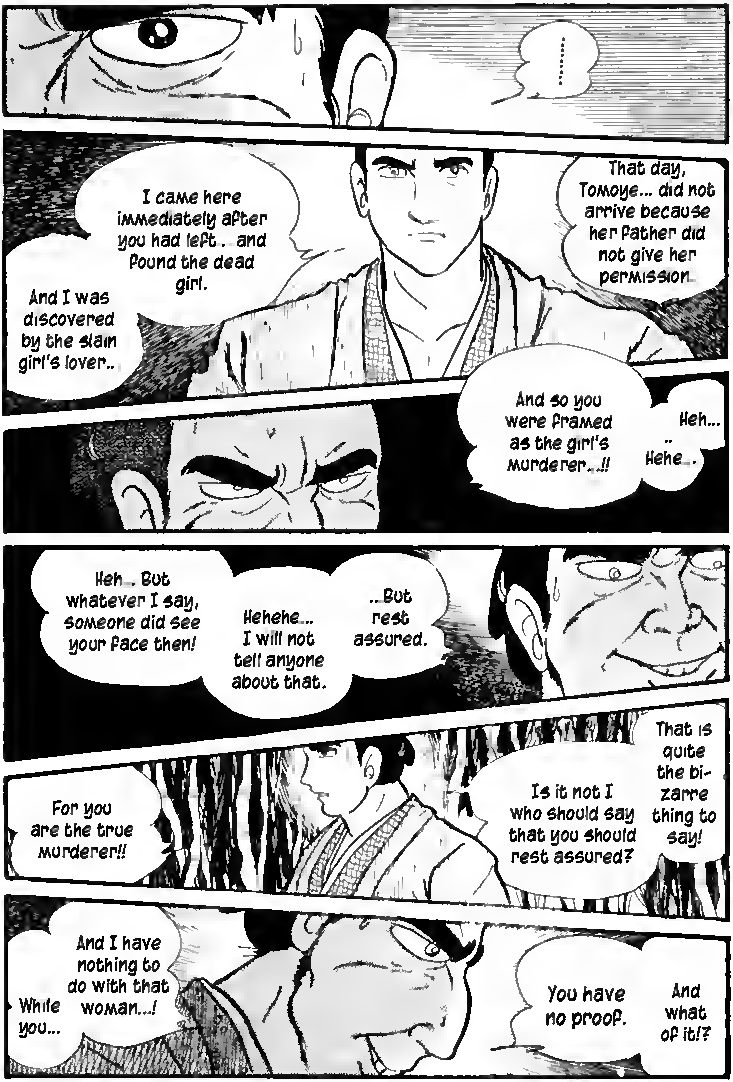
...How does this sound?
...Kojiro, the well-renowned gentle man... is actually a sexual degenerate,
and he struts around illicitly seducing the girls of the town despite being betrothed...
and when the girls become with child... he takes them out!
I guessed that you'd think so, too. But in that case, Tomoye's in danger!!
...Dammit.

That bastard's hiding in the same place where he just murdered the other woman...
...Who could he be waiting for?
Don't tell me... he's going to do the same to Tomoyo!?
Someone's coming!
Hmm!?
!!


There are matters of which I'd like to discuss with you!
...Why have you... brought us here!?
.....
..And the first..
is that I would like... to decline.. My marriage with Lady Shizui...!
.....
W-
What did you... say!?
..And the second...
Why would you refuse this marriage to our sister...!?
Wait... First... at least explain why!?
Wait
there is another maiden that I desire...!!
Be-cause

...And have you not...
already found out of her long ago?
Urgh!
Y-You scoundrel!
How dare you be so shameless...!!
Have you ever given thought to your status!?
...Yes, more than enough...
...I am the second son with a bleak future...
of a samurai clan with dissatisfying service.
And if I... were to wed your sister, with your much higher-ranked clan... It would be a heaven-sent, unprecedented marriage...
P-Precisely!
Precisely!!
...I have heard rumors of you among your peers... That you are a cowardly samurai who enjoys such feminine pleasures as birds and flowers!
Furthermore...

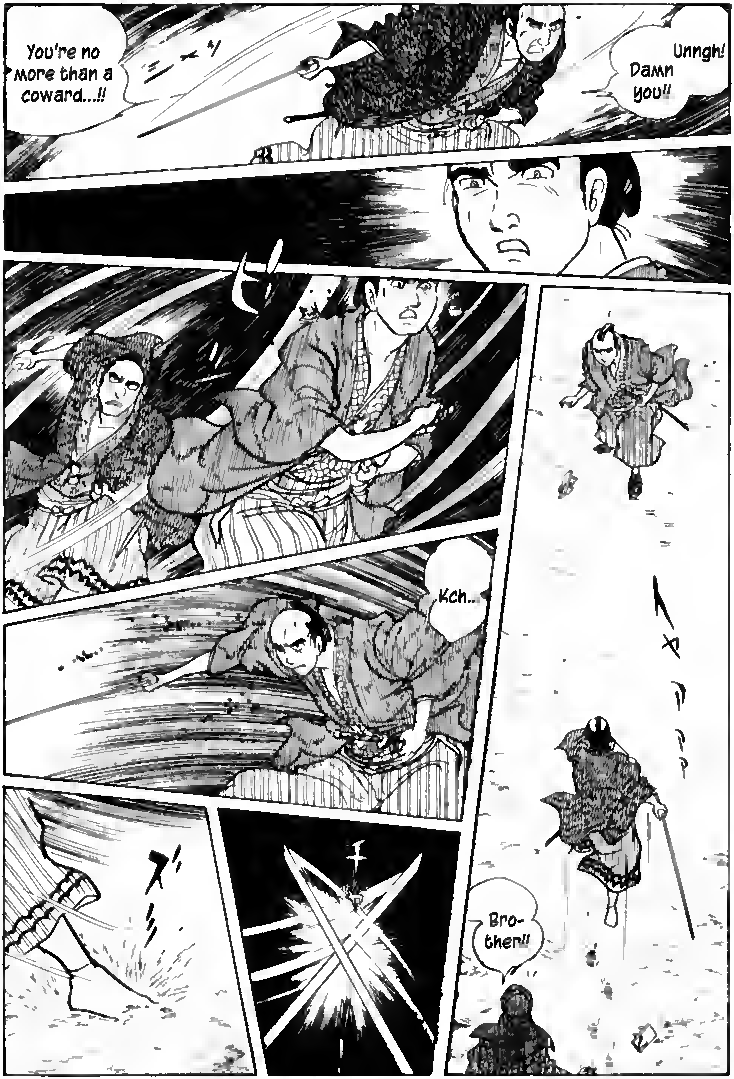
My mother and father.. were intimate with your parents.. and they took pity on you!!
And yet...
I... was opposed to this marriage at first.
You would marry a townsfolk girl...!?
Urr-rgh..
And yet..
And yet you..
You murdered that girl!?
...Is that why.
W-
What!?
Ulp!
You knew that day.. that Tomoye and I were to meet here, so you came here ahead of time.
was that I wished to ask you of that!
..The second matter..
By mistake.. you had killed another unfortunate girl.. who had, by chance, chosen the same exact day and time!!
But...


...!
That day, Tomoye... did not arrive because her father did not give her permission.
I came here immediately after you had left. and found the dead girl.
And I was discovered by the slain girl's lover..
And so you were framed as the girl's murderer...!!
Heh... .. Hehe...
Heh... But whatever I say, someone did see your face then!
Hehehe... I will not tell anyone about that.
...But rest assured.
That is quite the bizarre thing to say!
Is it not I who should say that you should rest assured?
For you are the true murderer!!
You have no proof.
And what of it!?
And I have nothing to do with that woman...!
While you...

They will only dig deeper for the truth, and only deepen your suspicion...
Heh..he..Isn't that right!?
They all know that you were at the scene of the crime..
Even if you attempt to tell-tale..
In fact, I have already..
..The officials are not as dumb as you think!
Ex-actly!
Damn you!!
Si-lence!!
I care not for that girl...
Eno-ugh!
No matter what I have to do, I will have you married!!
You and my sister come first!!
I could not bear it!
Yes, that is why!
That is why I felt I should kill the girl!
When I...
saw my sister weeping in agony... when she learned that there were other women...
I will kill anyone who dares make my sister.. Make Shizuka cry!
Even you!!

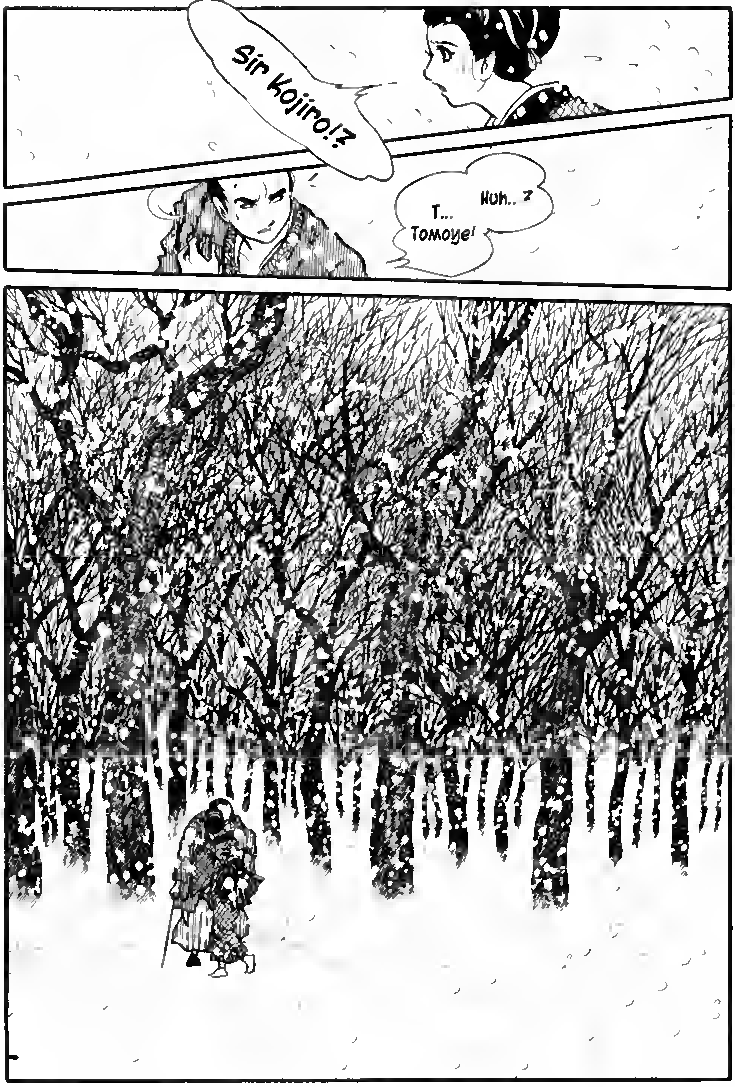
A mistake it may have been .. but you killed an innocent woman!!
Then why did you not extinguish my life first?
.. If that is true..
I will not marry Lady Shizuka!
then I would tell the truth!
If I... If I were to be arrested
I cannot let that happen!!
...Sir Kojiro,
You absolutely must marry me!
I will not let any other woman have you!!
..But I ask that you do not misunderstand me!

I... have not the slightest intent of saying that out of love!
In fact... I loathe men like you... who reek of femininity!
But
But even still... We must be bound in marriage!
Because... The public knows of this...
...And my pride as a woman will not let you be with a towns-folk girl..
No!!
I could not....
I could not accept that way of thinking of yours! That's why I...
Silence!
Silence, silence!!
If you...
absolutely insist on refusing...
I must kill you!!
...N-No!!
Even if you kill me...!!


You're no more than a coward...!!
Unngh! Damn you!!
Kch..
Brother!!

Urgh!!
Bro-
ther
!!
K-
Kojiro...
How dare
you!!
Urrgh...

T-This is... I...!!
E-Enough, Lady Shizuka!!
E-Enough!
Eek...!!
L...Lady Shizuka!!


Sir Kojiro!?
T... Tomoye!
Huh..?

Urgh!

February 1971 "The Black Primrose" (FIN)

佐武と市捕物控
SABU & ICHI
CHAPTER 55
PRESENTED BY
HOKUTO NO GUN
AND
HAPPY SCANS
TRANSLATED BY
SYSTEMATICCHAOS
CLEANED BY
WRIGHT
TYPESETTING BY
KAZUHIKO
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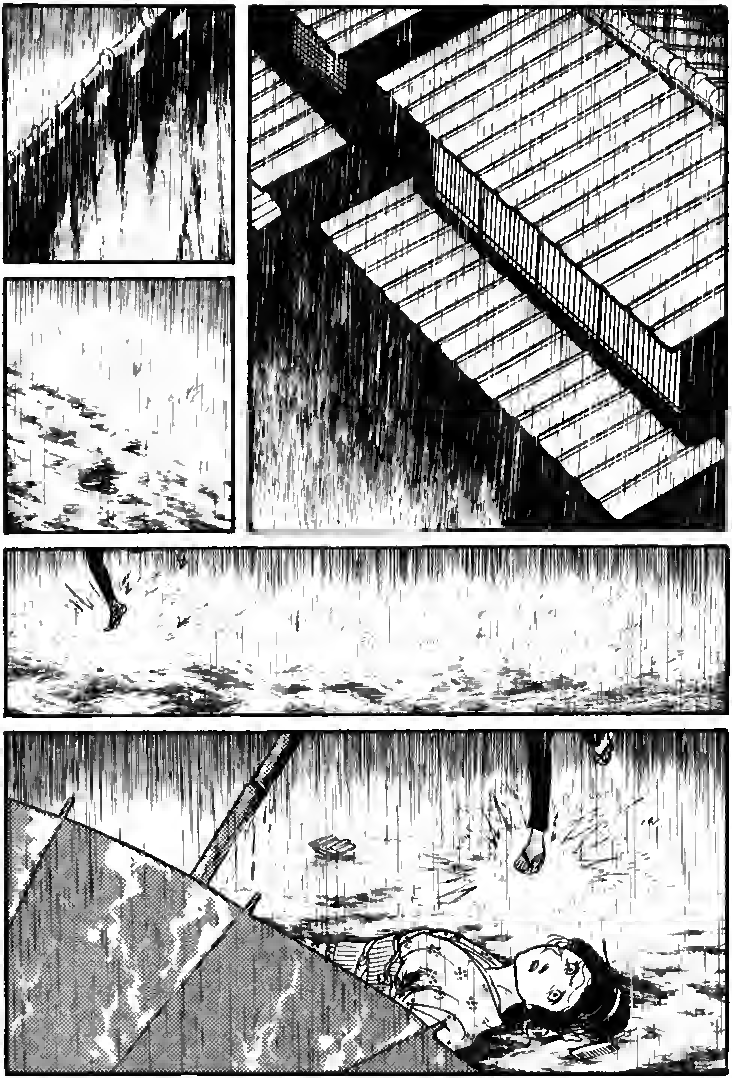
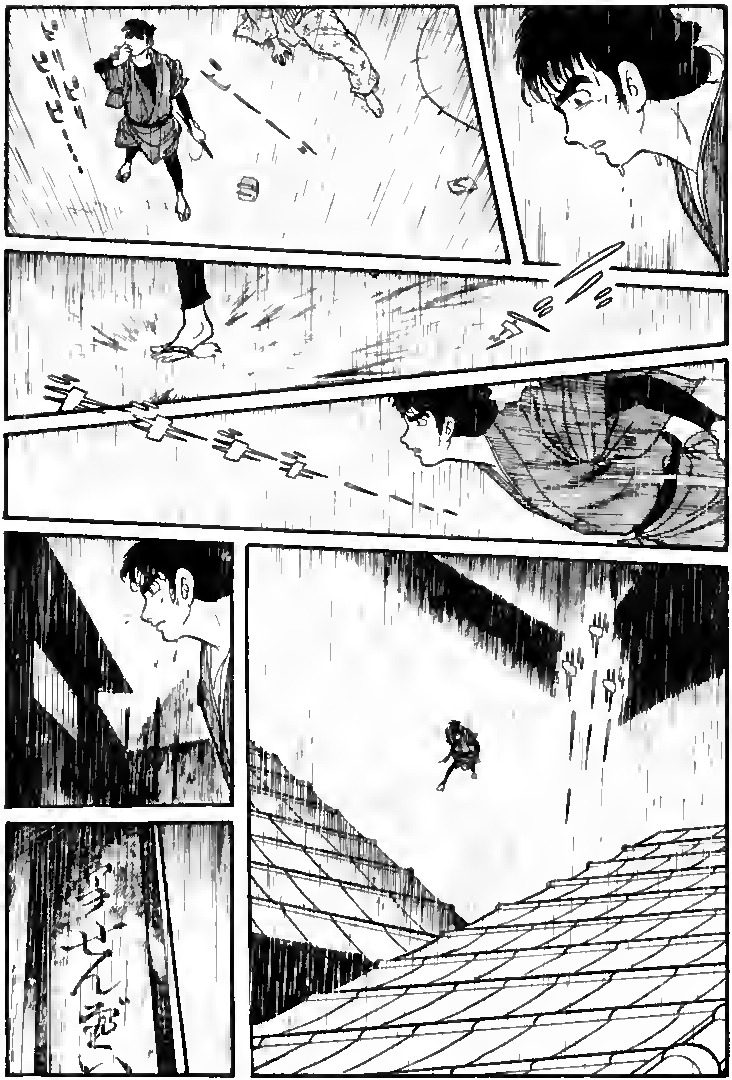
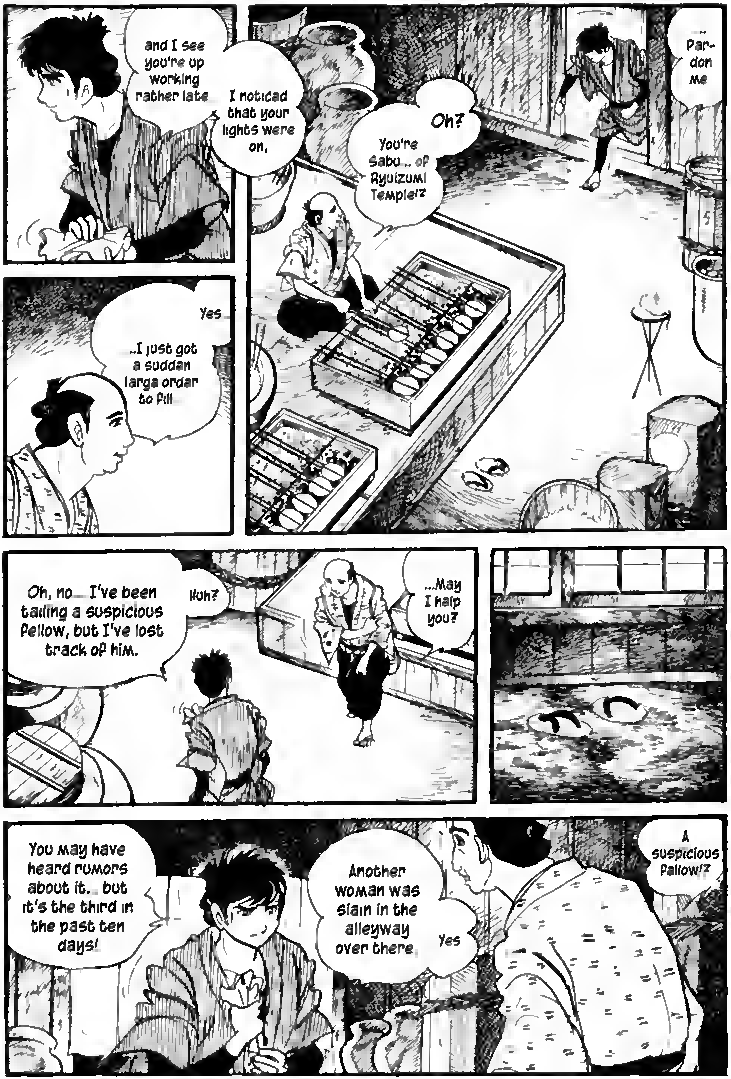
BY TROBMAN
WRITTEN BY
ISHINOMORI
SHŌTARŌ

Chapter 56: Rain-Hole




シーン
シーン…
ぎゃーっ


and I see you're up working rather late
I noticed that your lights were on,
Oh?
You're Sabu... of Ryuizumi Temple'z
...Pardon me
Yes
...I just got a sudden large order to fill
Oh, no... I've been tailing a suspicious fellow, but I've lost track of him.
Huh?
...May I help you?
You may have heard rumors about it... but it's the third in the past ten days!
Another woman was slain in the alleyway over there.
Yes
A suspicious fellow'z

By the way, Mr. Masanori,
I heard your brother Masatoke had returned ..
Y-Yes..
He just showed up about ten days ago .. said he'd been to Kamigata..
.....
What about today?
Did he leave just now!?
He was drunk, and said he lost his luck at gambling .. I worry about him.
Huh?
No,
..he left early this evening..
HMM....
This evening?
...Is that true!?
...Oh, do you need an umbrella..?
I hate this rain..
No, thank you. I'm already soaking wet.

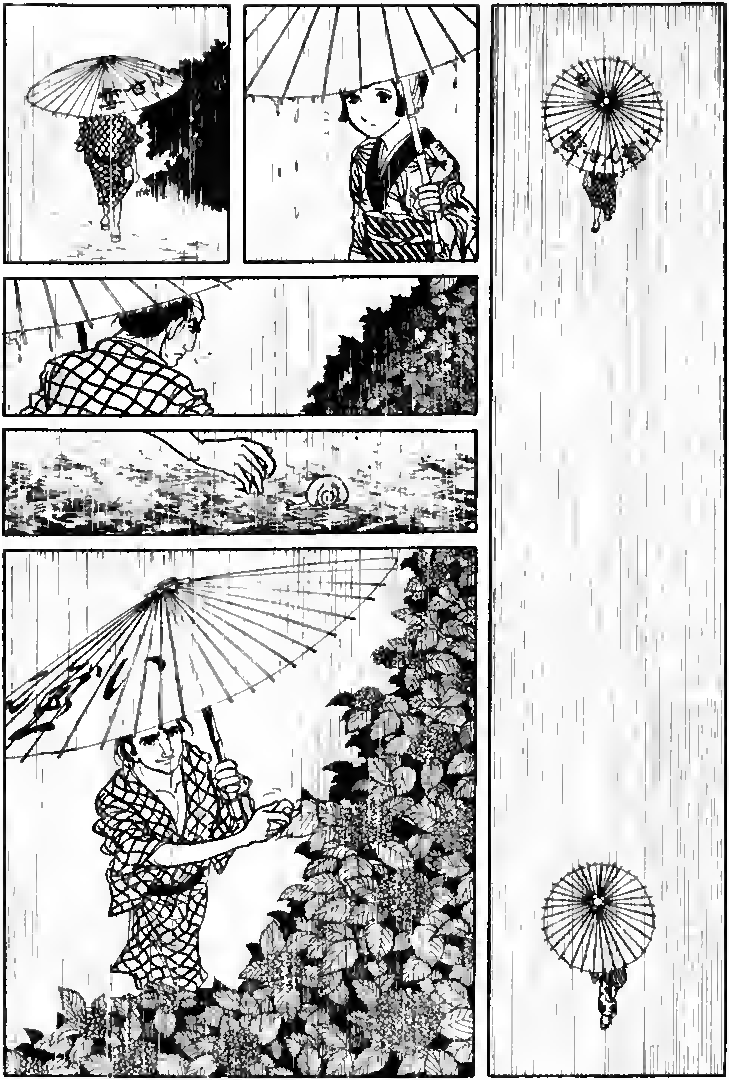
せんたく
Huh?
It's a good thing you make such a good wife!
.. Ayano,
Tee hee I mean... I come to this store all the time
If you were a weird woman ..
My!

I think I'll offer you a discount for the flattery.
We don't have to worry about losing such a precious customer.
Well, that's good for me, too.
Good day, ma'am.
Oh?
Then I suppose I should've flattered you even more.
You seem to be having fun.
May I offer you some tea?
I thank you for your business.
Teehee... That's why my father... loves these rice wafers.
Though he does get some rest once the rainy season ends...
Just like he always is; he sleeps, and gets up...
Is that so?
Oh?
It's fine, it's fine.
Why don't you come join us?
Ah, Mother, I'll...
Midori,
how is Boss Saheiji?

...These rice wafers were the one amazing thing that my husband left behind.
Thanks to him, we're very well-reputed...
Thank you
Go home safely, now.
They don't moisten, even in this humidity.
and you don't have to worry about them going bad
I want one!
After a long unemployment, my husband became an idle drunkard,
but when Masanori was born, he had a change of heart and opened a wafer store.
.....
and he did leave us with immense grief by failing partway through...
But when I look back, they were still precious memories.
But... being a samurai at heart, he was left with discontent for the job,
Oh, I'm wise to you and your attempts at buttering me up for discounts!
And Masanori found a gentle wife that truly suits him....
No pleasure without pain... I guess

スッ
ホホ
メメメ
ホホ！
Oh, please!
...Masashige, right...?
You've become so sexy, I almost didn't recognize you!
Hehe.. You're... Midori, right?
How could you be so uncouth!?
Hey! Welcome here!
I'm heading out now, Mother.
Again?
Why don't you help out your brother now and then?
Kch
This rain's showing no signs of stopping!
Heh Well, make yourself at home

No...
He's always been an ill-mannered child...
I'm so sorry
...If only that child would smarten up a little...
I would have nothing more to say.
He.. You may know this already, Midori,
but he's been violent from a very young age, quite unlike his brother...
But my husband preferred him over his well-mannered brother...
He said he truly was the son of a samurai, and favored him ..
Perhaps it was all that special treatment that led to him turning out like this ..
根切仕事

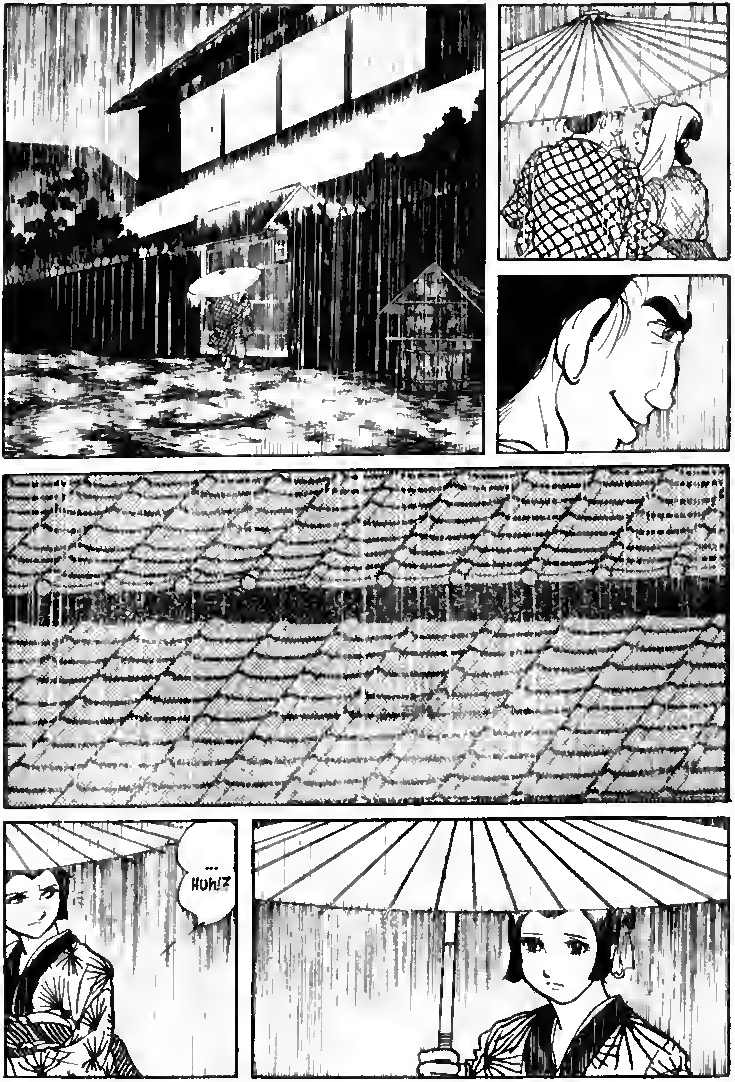


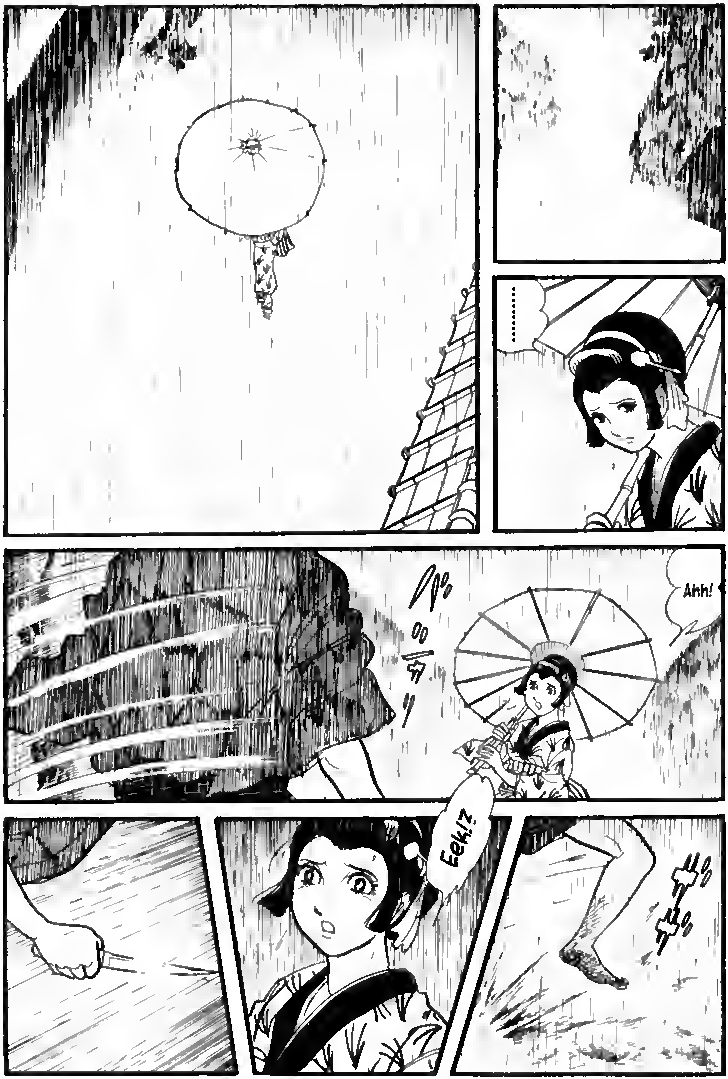
I mean it!
...Oh, please!
That was delicious
Ahhh
And my mother-in-law... She may be strict at times, but she cares for me even more.
Of course, my husband is gentle.
...I truly am blessed...

..until I anded up in tha cara of tha Master as a seam-stress.
And I want through a lot of hardship and sorrow after that...
My mother and Father died when I was young.
.....
Now, save that talk for after you've eaten these!
Midori, the last time we spoke you mentioned that there's no pleasure without pain, correct?
It really is true...
.. and she asked that I be her son's bride...
The Master and... my current mother-in-law were acquaintances... and she saw me over the many times she came to visit.
I can...
Teehee... I'll bet
that the happiness I have now washed all that suffering away!
but I guess you've had much to suffer.
I wouldn't guess it from just seeing you the way you are now...

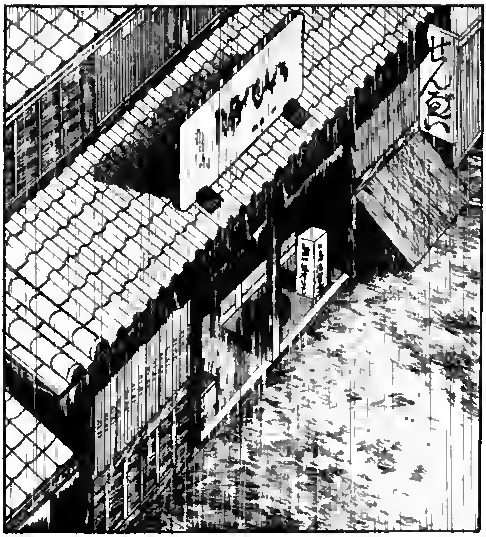
...Everyone may speak ill of him, but even my brother-in-law Masatake is very kind at heart.
barely believe... how many good people are around me..
...I know!
What an azure sky..
It's almost frightening!

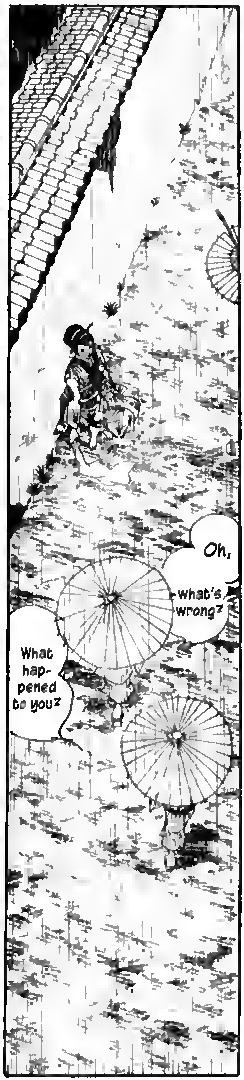
Hoho— Come to think of it, you and Ayano are about the same age, aren't you?
Every time I come here, you have an even happier-looking face, Ayano!
Hoho hoho!
.. It's almost like I'm buying jealousy here instead of rice wafers!
That's why I tell you — If you're so jealous, you should just marry Sabu already!
Yes.
Hehehe, I'll bet that Sabu.. must be sneezing right now.
Oh, my, are you sure you want to say that?
not at all reliable, unlike Masakichi!
Hmpf. But he's...
……
ﾌﾞｴｯｸｼｮﾝ!

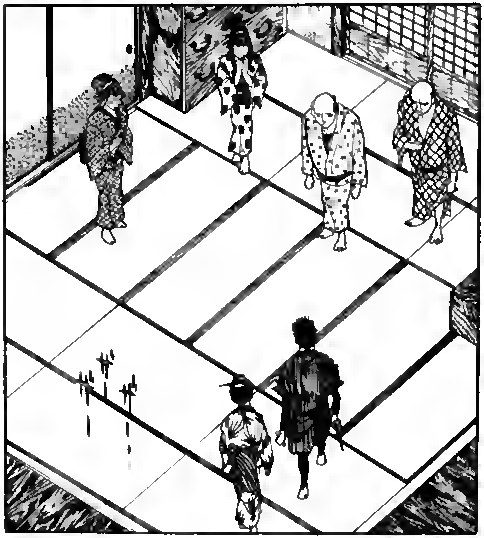

...
HUH!?

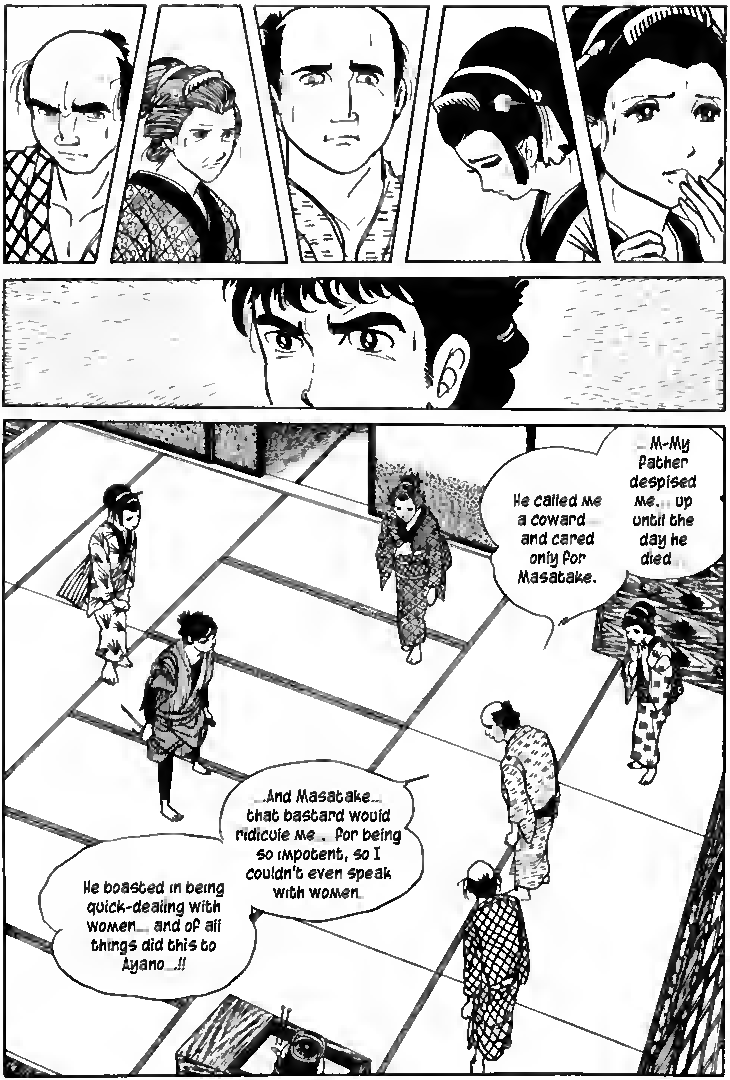

Ahh!
Eek!?

Ah!
Ahh!!
Ahhh!
Y-
You're
...!?
Urk!
.....
ズ…!


せんべい


Oh,
what's wrong?
What happened to you?



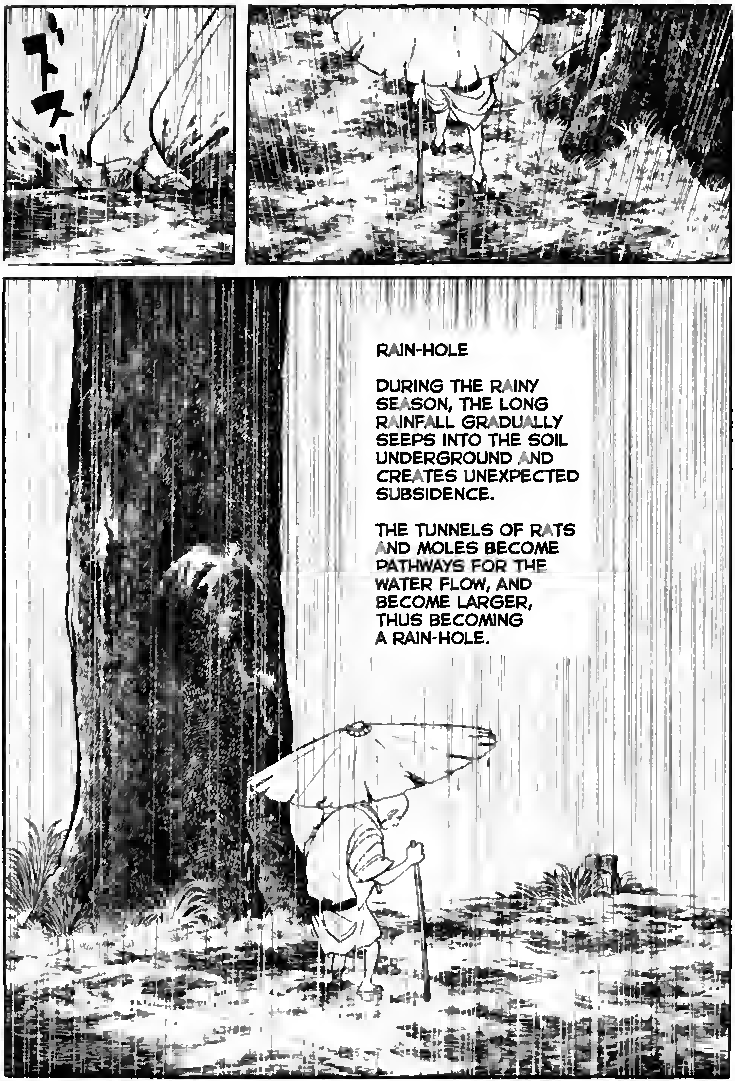

...M-My father despised me... up until the day he died...
He called me a coward... and cared only for Masatake.
...And Masatake... that bastard would ridicule me... for being so impotent, so I couldn't even speak with women.
He boasted in being quick-dealing with women... and of all things did this to Ayano...!!

.....
T-That's why.. That's why I...
I wanted to prove to you all,
that I, t-t...that even I...
Y...Y-Y-You have.. b-been coming frequently to my store lately.
I-I was sure... that someone would notice...
and come by my store... t-t-t.. to investigate...!!
Murderer!!
M. Mother!
Mother!!

.....
W-What do I do... What do I do? I-I've done something.. s-something dreadful!
Mother !!
H-Help me!
Ahh!

W...
Why?
Why!?
...Why!?

so he could think up a reason why as he talked.
..That's why he talked,
Well, I don't think even Masakichi knew the answer himself.
Why.. .you ask ...?
And that hole can change a completely sane human into a cold blooded murderer
like a rain-hole after a long rainfall...
burn cracks in a man's heart into bigger and bigger holes
All the tiny things that happen over time
But the human mind is not something that can be so easily explained
Malice, greed, defiance..
...People like us give names to motives for murder...
...And that's the scary part...!!


ゴゴゴ
RAIN-HOLE
DURING THE RAINY SEASON, THE LONG RAINFALL GRADUALLY SEEPS INTO THE SOIL UNDERGROUND AND CREATES UNEXPECTED SUBSIDENCE.
THE TUNNELS OF RATS AND MOLES BECOME PATHWAYS FOR THE WATER FLOW, AND BECOME LARGER, THUS BECOMING A RAIN-HOLE.

佐武と市捕物控⑨　紅葉狩

小学館文庫

石森章太郎
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代表作「サイボーグ009」「佐武と市捕物控」「ジュン」他。

（検印廃止）

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